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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

INKPRINT EDITION

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization
speaking for the blind—it is the blind speaking for themselves.

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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If you or a friend wish to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia non-profit corporation, the sum of \$ _____ (or, "____ percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: ____") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons and to be held and administered by direction of its Executive Committee."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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WHITE CANE WEEK 1970

From South Carolina to Alaska, from Maine to Hawaii, May 15 to May 21, 1970 will be featured as "White Cane Week" by the National Federation of the Blind. Actively participating in the publicizing and utilization of this very special week will be most of our NFB affiliates. The order of the week will be the mailing of letters describing the functions and activities of our affiliates together with publicity materials and an appeal for funds. Dinners, dances, speakers, shows, slogans, white cane lapel pins and braille alphabet cards are the tools of communication with the local community. This is the week to tell everyone about the blind and what they are doing to help themselves and other blind persons--to tell the citizenry of our achievements and to enlist their help in furthering the cause of the organization. White Cane Week is the time for synchronized effort across the land. Every affiliate should have its thing with which to go. Whatever the adopted project may be, it should have the dual purpose and potential of raising funds for the organization and calling attention to the achievements and services of the local affiliates and the NFB.

During recent months the NFB White Cane Week Committee addressed two information bulletins to state and chapter presidents and local White Cane Week chairmen. Many affiliates are aware of the vital importance of fundraising and the benefits accruing from continuing public relations projects geared to fundraising and publicity. We are pleased to note that the newer affiliates are taking positive steps by venturing into this area of activity through well considered programs. Though it may be only a small beginning, good leadership, wise decisions and hard work will bring gratifying results and increasing growth to the organization. At the same time, the local community, the county and the state will inevitably get the message being broadcast via well planned projects. Going on from there it will be found that with a substantial treasury or reserve funds, an organization can involve itself more deeply and vigorously in the affairs and activities governing programs affecting the blind. We know that such involvement is a costly route but it is still the only way to get action and gain full results. By designating the week of May 15 to May 21 of each year as "White Cane Week", the NFB opened tremendous possibilities which would prove of benefit to state affiliates. The states which were venturesome enough to make use of White Cane Week from the beginning now have thriving programs. Their success should give encouragement to affiliates which have not yet participated in White Cane Week activities. The Federation has also provided the materials with which to undertake a local or state campaign. The National White Cane Week Committee is at your service and ready to advise you. It is not too late to obtain some of the materials which may help you in preparing a local function. Simply address a letter to the White Cane Week Committee at 205 South Western Avenue, Room 203, Los Angeles, California 90004. Tell them what you have in mind and the return mail will bring an answer to your request.

* * * * *

SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS INCREASED

Just before the Christmas recess, the Congress passed H. R. 13270, the so-called Tax Reform Act of 1969. The President signed the bill on December 30. From the point of view of the twenty-five million Americans who are social security beneficiaries, the most significant provision was a fifteen percent increase in benefits, effective January 1, 1970 (the increases will be reflected in the checks received in April, including the retroactive amounts for the preceding two months.) The minimum benefit amount has been raised from \$55 to \$64 a month.

Section 1006 of the bill provides that social security increases for the months of January and February, 1970 be disregarded in determining the amount of the grant of public assistance for those who are concurrently social security beneficiaries and recipients of public assistance. This means that at least \$18 of the increase for the two months will be passed on to recipients.

Section 1007 of the bill requires each State, in determining the need of its public assistance recipients, to assure that every recipient of aid under the adult categories who also receives an OASDI benefit increase will receive an increase in the total of his public assistance and OASDI benefit payments equal to \$4 a month. This requirement is made applicable only to the months of March, April, and May in order to allow the Congress time to consider the matter in connection with its work on major welfare proposals this year. The Congress also expressed the hope that all States will raise the income of all public assistance recipients not receiving social security benefits by \$4 a month, pointing out that the fifteen percent OASDI benefit increase will mean an average \$9.50 increase to those beneficiaries also eligible for public assistance and that this amount will be more than sufficient to enable the States to pass on the \$4 increase to all, for the months of March, April and May, 1970.

In discussions in the House on the bill, especially the retroactive and pass-on features, Representative Philip Burton of California pointed out that when the Congress permitted (but did not require) the States to disregard up to \$5 a month of income from any source in computing public assistance grants in 1965, only thirteen States complied. When the Congress raised this amount to \$7.50 in 1967, there were still twenty-six States which had not implemented the provision at all. This led Mr. Burton to say:

While I am delighted that the conference approved, in part, amendments that Senator Harris and I prepared and which were vital to assure some measure of equity for our Nation's needy on public assistance—I must note with regret that about 1.5 million aged, blind, and disabled who do not receive social security must rely on the States for any benefit under this bill. I must further note that many of the 1.4 million who benefit under the Burton-Harris amendments will still have \$5.50 or more a month of their small social security increase taken away from them if they are currently on public assistance.

Congressman Burton, in a further discussion with Congressman Wilbur Mills, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said on the floor:

As I understand it, and as has been stated by the Chairman on previous occasions, it is the earnest desire and expectation of the committee, because of public assistance savings generated to the States under this bill, that the States will raise the grants \$4 for those who are not helped by the social security disregard?

In reply, Congressman Mills stated:

We are not saying they have to do it, but I will be the most disappointed individual around here if they do not, and when we come to the consideration of the welfare programs their actions will certainly be considered.

Mr. Burton:

The gentleman from Arkansas has anticipated my next question. I am very grateful for that reassurance as there are literally over 1.1 million aged, crippled and blind who are helped by the \$4 disregard and when that question comes up in the [Ways and Means] Committee deliberations next year, I rely upon the Chairman's assurance if the States do not provide an increase for those people on public assistance but who do not receive social security, that that failure to act will be taken into consideration when you review the public assistance program next year.

Mr. Mills:

The gentleman from California reads my mind.

Among the many other provisions of the Tax Reform Act of 1969 are the following:

An increase in the individual personal income tax exemption from the present \$600 to \$650 next July 1, to \$700 by 1972 and to \$750 in 1973.

A three-step rise in the standard tax deduction—now \$1,000 or ten percent of income, whichever is less—to \$2,000 or fifteen percent by 1973.

An additional \$1,100 income exemption for those with annual earnings of \$3,300 or less, aimed at removing five and one-half million poor families from the tax rolls.

A new schedule for single taxpayers designed to narrow the gap between what they pay and what is paid by married people with the same income.

A maximum tax on earned income, reducing rates from the current maximum of

70 percent to 60 percent in 1971 and 50 percent in 1972 and thereafter.

A new minimum tax of at least ten percent on all income over \$30,000. One major loophole, tax-exempt state and municipal bond interest, is not affected.

The bill as a whole provides tax relief to a lot of taxpayers but contains little in the way of long-range tax reforms. Chairman Wilbur Mills believes that the bill will produce an additional \$6.4 billion in 1970, then drop to a negligible \$288 million in 1971. By 1972 the government will be receiving \$1.7 billion less than present revenues, and the loss will grow to \$3.7 billion in 1973.

Whatever its shortcomings, the Tax Reform Act of 1969 is noteworthy for the fifteen percent increase in social security benefits and for the pass-on provision which has been made mandatory for the first time on the States.

In a very real sense this action of the Congress in requiring the States to pass on to the recipients of public assistance at least a portion of the increases in social security benefits constitutes a signal victory for the National Federation of the Blind. Over the years the NFB has had several bills introduced to effect a "pass on" of social security increases to those concurrently receiving public assistance, instead of having these funds simply go into the treasuries of the States. Three years ago the Chief of the Washington Office of the NFB testified solely on this issue in committee hearings. At that time he stated:

For twenty-seven years, the National Federation of the Blind has worked to correct and eliminate inadequacies in Public Assistance and Social Security programs, so as to make dependence upon such programs less of a punitive experience for elderly and disabled people. Since the founding of our organization in 1940, Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind has worked in Congress after Congress to secure increases in Social Security payments, to secure increases in the federal share in state programs of public assistance payments. And Congress after Congress has acted to raise the level of Public Assistance and Social Security payments--but, too often, the intended beneficiaries of Congressional concern and generosity have not benefited at all from such ameliorative legislation.

When many of these people discover--and many will unless remedial action is taken--that they are not one cent better off in their combined Social Security-Public Assistance income than they were before--they can only respond, in their anger and frustration--'We, the poor, have been flimflammed again!'

But actions can be taken to prevent this unfortunate situation from happening. My second proposal would amend titles I, X, XIV, and XVI of the Social Security Act to exempt all increases in Social Security payments made subsequent to January 1, 1966, from consideration in determining a person's need for Public Assistance and the amount of aid he should receive. This proposal, enacted into

law, would guarantee that increases in Social Security payments, provided by Congress to raise the level of such payments, would do just that, would be received by elderly and disabled persons, would be available to them as increased income. The proposal would effectively protect Social Security payment increases from being absorbed by the intricacies of federal-state Public Assistance financing, and it would assure that the people intended by Congress to be benefited by such increases would, in fact, be benefited, would, in fact, receive them.

Thus, persistence has again paid off and there has now, for the first time, been translated into Federal law the principle of a mandatory "pass on" on Social Security increases to recipients of public assistance.

* * * * *

EASTERN AIRLINES BOOSTS BLIND COMPUTERS

The computer industry, particularly computer programming, offers a new and major employment breakthrough for the visually handicapped, according to A. F. Collard a supervisor of programming for Eastern Airlines in Miami.

Speaking in Cleveland at a recent international conference on the blind in computer programming, Mr. Collard said the employment potential is hardly tapped. "The computer is so flexible it can handle output in print or in Braille and a blind computer specialist is not disadvantaged in using this new tool of our society," he said. "In fact, a blind person's power of concentration may actually be an advantage."

The conference, suggested by John Schuch, a blind programmer employed by Eastern in Miami, familiarized companies in the computer industry with the potential of the blind and urged development of Braille attachments and training programs for blind persons.

"In the past," Mr. Collard said, "society gave blind people the most menial jobs. It was not exclusively the result of indifference. It was simply that jobs which were demanding mentally required a person to be able to read and write in the usual language."

"But the computer uses new languages and it is indifferent to whether the person who prepares a program is blind or not."

"We now have the opportunity to look at the capabilities of a person rather than his disabilities," Mr. Collard observed. "The demands of this age of technology are such that we must fully utilize all of our resources. One of the major resources we have failed to fully appreciate is the handicapped."

Mr. Collard said that Eastern, already a leader in employing the handicapped, and other companies with computer operations are interested in hiring blind candidates. There are now about 350 blind computer programmers in the United States and about 150 in training

in the seven programming schools offering instruction for the blind.

* * * * *

THE ARIZONA CONVENTION

by
James R. Carlock

The twenty-third annual convention of the Arizona Federation of the Blind was held on November 8th and 9th at the El Presidio Hotel in Tucson, Arizona. Mr. James Omvig represented the National Federation of the Blind.

The convention highlights were many and varied. The banquet address by Mr. James Omvig on the NFB and the Iowa Commission was very informative and stimulating. Mrs. Helen Clegg, president of the Tucson Association of the Blind was the recipient of the Nicholas G. Zieger Memorial Service Award. Mr. Thomas Combs received the \$100.00 Henry Rush scholarship award.

We rededicated our organization to get the Legislature to pass the Model White Cane Law, and a bill to bring about an Arizona Commission for the Blind.

Other resolutions called for the AFB to work with dedication to see that the blind people of Arizona have at least one mobility instructor; also to recommend to the Legislature that the financial request by our existing agency serving the blind DRVI be granted in full so as to enable maximum results in the rehabilitation effort; another liberalized our constitution by lifting the specific months in which an annual convention could be held; another removed all named special and standing committees from the constitution, leaving the committeeships to the judgment of the president. The committees named as part of the Executive Board were replaced by directorships, one position elected at this convention and two to be elected at the next. Two items were resolved for investigation and study; to guarantee a specific amount for a new board to work with and to prepare a pamphlet sized booklet to circulate to members indicating members and their addresses, committees and their addresses and to include a current constitution.

The convention election was very interesting and created a few changes. President James R. Carlock re-elected; First Vice President Ray Miranda, formerly Treasurer; Second Vice President Tom Combs, newly elected; Secretary Katherine Hurley, re-elected; Treasurer David Armejo, newly elected; Director Joe Hurley, formerly First Vice President.

The next AFB convention will be sometime next Spring in the city of Yuma, Arizona. James R. Carlock will be the delegate to the NFB convention.

We are on the move and incidentally El Presidio in Spanish means “the fortress”. Could we have chosen a better place to join our fellow Federationists at the barricade? Will the blind of Arizona join us? We hope they will.

* * * * *

BLIND TEACHER STILL GOING STRONG

by
Jack Zaleski

[Editor’s Note: The following story appeared in the Devils Lake (North Dakota) Journal.]

“With training and opportunity a blind person can do just as well as his sighted neighbor in the average job.”

So said Mrs. Judy Saunders, fourth grade teacher at Prairie View school who is living proof of that statement.

The twenty-four year old native of Dunkerton, Iowa, has been totally blind since the age of seven, following surgery for a brain tumor.

She is North Dakota’s only sightless elementary school teacher and one of two hundred across the nation.

Her outlook on life and teaching could be the envy of most sighted persons.

“Blindness is a characteristic, not a handicap,” said the attractive Mrs. Saunders. “A jockey must be small; a football player large. Those are limiting characteristics. When you’re blind, there are certain things that you can’t do. Drive a truck, for instance,” she laughed.

She is married to Dr. Curtis R. Saunders, Devils Lake chiropractor, who has only four to five per cent vision. They met at a national convention of the Federation of the Blind in Los Angeles and again the following year at a convention in Des Moines. In June of 1969 they were married and came to live in Devils Lake.

A 1968 graduate of the University of Iowa she began teaching at Prairie View in September. Her first teaching assignment was fourth grade in a suburb of Des Moines.

Initially, a wary Devils Lake school administration received complaints and repercussions from indignant parents who didn’t want their children taught by a blind teacher.

Said Edwin Grossman, Devils Lake elementary school director and principal of Prairie View school, "Not having worked with any personnel with this particular handicap, I approached the situation with some misgiving and apprehension."

In short time, however, Mrs. Saunders' ability proved itself in the classroom with her students.

C. A. Erlandson, Devils Lake superintendent of schools, noted "While there were some qualms over employing a teacher with a disadvantage in sight, Mrs. Saunders has carried on her duties in a commendable fashion. She has full control over her class and most of her students are enthusiastic and fascinated with their teacher. Parents have accepted her and feel that their children are making the proper progress."

"My kids are more interested in school," commented one parent. "In fact, they're rather proud that they have a blind teacher and brag about it to their friends."

Mrs. Saunders, who had more misgivings about parents rather than children, said, "Children are more adaptable than adults. They accept things more readily. Any ideas about blindness that they may have, come from their parents."

Expressing mild surprise, she said, "Everything has worked out exceedingly well here. The response from the people of Devils Lake has been overwhelming, nearly one hundred per cent."

In her fourth grade classroom at Prairie View, Mrs. Saunders' students have learned to accept more responsibility. The daily attendance report and lunch count, normally done by the teacher, are student duties.

Keeping order is not a special problem in her classroom. She has set up a system of student patrols who report to her if a classmate is causing trouble or breaking rules.

"In this way," said Mrs. Saunders, "the children mostly discipline themselves. They are watched by each other and take great pride in being designated patrols."

Mrs. Saunders uses Braille textbooks for herself. Where she doesn't have the Braille counterpart of a text, as the class spelling book, students explain their particular problem to her, often reading it from their book, and she helps them in that way.

"Children learn to verbalize more," noted Mrs. Saunders. "They tell me their problems, and in the process learn to express themselves better. I think it's good training."

Commented Grossman, "I feel that Mrs. Saunders has taught her students such intangible values as initiative, resourcefulness and self discipline. No doubt her students have learned much about overcoming the hindrance with which they have had to cope."

After attending the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School at Vinton for several years and graduating from high school, Mrs. Saunders spent one year at the Orientation and Rehabilitation Center for Adults run by the Iowa Blind Commission, prior to entering college. The center teaches “alternative techniques” for the blind such as walking with canes, Braille shorthand and cooking.

Most important says Mrs. Saunders, “The center teaches an attitude towards blindness, a philosophy, if you will, that blindness is not a handicap.”

Both Dr. and Mrs. Saunders have been working in Grand Forks forming a local chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. The Federation, an organization of blind persons working together to improve educational and employment opportunities for the blind, has forty-two state affiliates, one of which is North Dakota.

The Grand Forks local chapter will direct its efforts toward discriminatory practices against the blind, according to Mrs. Saunders. One major program is aimed at opening the University of North Dakota’s School of Education to blind students, who have been denied admission up to now.

“The idea that blind people can’t teach is ridiculous,” said Mrs. Saunders. She plans to point to herself as an obviously successful example of a blind teacher as a key argument in the Federation’s dispute with UND.

“It’s a hard case of public education,” she said. “The difficult thing is getting people to give up misconceptions about the blind.”

Mrs. Saunders admits to one discouraging aspect of blindness that bothers her. “I don’t like it when people treat me as if I were dumb or deaf or something. If I’m in a cafe with friends, sometimes a waitress will ask them, ‘Does she want anything?’ as if I weren’t even there! Once again, it all goes back to people’s lack of understanding about blindness.”

Mrs. Saunders believes that the Lake Region has “distasteful weather,” but she likes the town and its people. She said that the attitude in Devils Lake is very good, considering the town’s limited experience with the blind.

The Saunders renounce the stereotyped blind person as someone who can only do small, unimportant jobs. Both husband and wife are testaments to the fallacy of that argument.

Has she ever thought about using her skills to teach other blind persons?

“Yes, I’ve thought about it,” she admits. “But a blind person too often works with the blind because he thinks that’s the only thing he can do. He should first work in competitive employment with sighted people.”

Summing up her refreshing philosophy, Mrs. Saunders insisted, "The real problem with blindness is not the lack of sight, but rather society's misunderstanding and misconceptions about blindness and the capabilities of blind people to do as well as anyone in most jobs."

* * * * *

A FUNDRAISING PROGRAM: THE MEMO CALENDAR
by
Keith E. Denton

By 1954 the Fundraising Committee of the Montana Association for the Blind found it apparent that a major fundraising project was needed to finance and expand our annual Summer School for the Adult Blind. Following inquiries, we found that Montana was the only state, at that time, where the PTA did not have the franchise to sell the type of memo calendar that we had in mind. After consulting with a printer, we first ordered a loose-leaf memo calendar. Later, we found that we could borrow a calendar form which was used by the Children's Orthopedic Hospital in Seattle. It is this same kind of calendar which we adopted from the Hospital and which we still use today--a booklet calendar made to hang or use in a notebook. The slogans appearing at the bottom of each sheet have been changed from time to time. The envelope still bears the original inscription: "Help the Blind to Help Themselves."

For the past several years we have ordered ten to twelve thousand calendars annually, distributing them first at convention time, when members take them home for sale in their own communities. Some do their selling personally; others have individuals (especially neighborhood children) sell for them; while still others enlist the help of organizations such as church groups and Lions in disposing of them. Perhaps the best means for selling calendars is the establishment of booths in post office lobbies and supermarkets. The sales person is allowed to keep 20% of the sales price, (\$.10 on each \$.50 calendar) if he wishes. This, of course, provides incentive to both MAB members and others who help with the project. This year we have ordered seventeen thousand calendars and are in the process of selling them. Generally, there are quite a few unaccounted for calendars by the time the selling season ends, but the initial cost to us is not so great that this represents a problem.

It is important to get the calendars to prospective customers early, so they are first distributed in the summer and sales begin as soon as preparations are made locally. We try to have much of our selling completed by Christmas, for so many calendars are given out by banks and other businesses that it would be a less profitable scheme, if we tried to compete with the gift calendars. Perhaps this project would not have been so successful had we tried selling a smaller calendar. But our regular customers tell us that one of its chief selling points is the large date brackets in which there is lots of room to write.

The MAB has found this method of fundraising most acceptable to the public. There is no conflict with community or national fundraising projects. Each year sees an increase in sales; and each year, when we increase our order from the printers, the price goes down and the net earnings of the program go up.

* * * * *

BLINDNESS DOESN'T STOP THIS ENGINEER

[Editor's Note: The following story is reprinted from the Home News of New Brunswick, New Jersey.]

Blinded at twenty-one, cocky, crewcut Dr. Walter Jacobs at Rutgers College of Engineering now is thirty and a "most happy fella." "When it comes right down to it, I find myself quite a lucky fellow. I've a good wife, good family, good job," emphasized Jake, as he's known to faculty colleagues and fellow students who admire the tenacity and talent that won him a Ph.D. from Rutgers in June and appointment as assistant research professor in ceramics on August 1.

Jacobs, who was born and raised in Avenel, Woodbridge, was by his own admission an indifferent student at Woodbridge High School and recalled "I graduated in the lower third of my class." A year later, when he had saved \$500 from a job he used that money to pay his own tuition to Rutgers Preparatory School, where he repeated his senior year and graduated near the top of his class. After passing his college board examination, he was accepted by Denver University, which he entered in 1957.

At twenty-one, when in his junior year as a chemistry major he married a Denver girl. That summer, he took a job as chemist with a small Denver firm that dealt with rare chemicals.

Jacobs was blinded on September 20, 1960, by a chemical explosion in the firm's laboratory, which also almost cost him his life. In fact, his body was so mangled by the accident that a DOA tag was put on his body when he first arrived at the hospital.

Fortunately another doctor detected a faint pulse and he was rushed to surgery where he underwent a six and one-half hour operation and had eighteen pints of blood pumped into him.

When he recovered consciousness three days later, his wife and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John L. Jacobs of Avenel, "were all there" lending encouragement.

By 1962, he was back in New Jersey living with his folks and taking night courses at Rutgers. "Between my sophomore and junior year I got permission to build a shed next to my house. I used it for office and study. It was worth the effort, I made the dean's list for three semesters," he related.

Jacobs, who has consistently placed high in his class, received his bachelor's degree in 1965, his master's in 1967 and his Ph.D. degree the past June. He delivered papers on his ceramic research before the American Ceramics Society Convention in New York City in 1967 and in Washington last May.

Three daughters were born to Jacobs and his wife during his student days too. The girls range from five to eight.

"Being blind, having a family and going to school, I had a little bit more incentive. My days of laziness were well behind me," he said of his studies.

The determined young ceramics engineer also believes, "I probably had the edge over sighted students in the class. I think blindness helped me. I was able to retain more than if sighted, mostly because I was forced to by my handicap."

Jacobs, whose graduate research closely paralleled research at Bell Laboratories, turned down an offer of employment in industry, because "I'm being quite picky about what I want to do. I prefer to wait for something I consider a challenge and of interest to me." His research on his new job at Rutgers is being conducted under an industrial grant.

For his graduate research, he built a kiln "primarily because none of the other kilns here could go as high in temperature as I needed to go." He has braille temperature readings, so that he can record the kiln's heat.

Jacobs, who is "not afraid to get my hands dirty," has built several kilns off campus since graduation and pointed out "I am working on the side now doing some consulting. The Heights is full of bookcases by Jacobs," he also noted. "I have a full cabinet shop at my Dad's place. I enjoy that work, building things in my extra time."

* * * * *

CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT IN REHABILITATION

by
Daniel Thursz

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the Rehabilitation Record, a

publication of the U. S. Department of HEW.]

“I am sorry. We do not give information on the telephone.” “The form must be filled out in triplicate, and notarized. . .” “The policy of our agency requires that the person in need present himself at our downtown office.” “We close at 4:30 p.m. Come back next Monday. . .”

These are typical bureaucratic responses to a call for help. The size of our service systems and the layers of structure create formidable obstacles to those for whom these various agencies have been created. The persistent complaint is that the process of getting service is interminable, highly impersonal, and inflexible. “It’s as if they really don’t care,” said one clinic patient. A maid, she had spent the entire day in a reception room waiting for a regular diabetic test that takes only a few minutes. In the process, she had lost a day’s wages.

One of the major reasons for involving consumers within our service systems is for them to influence the way our programs of rehabilitation are organized. Their insights can guide us in evaluating and increasing the effectiveness of our methods.

In the rehabilitation field, service systems vary greatly as to size, sponsorship, function, and structure. No plan developed for one particular institution is automatically applicable to all. There are no panaceas and few well-tested principles. We still face the dilemmas and knotty issues that emerged a few years ago when some blue-ribbon advisory and policy-making boards were transformed by the first appearance of consumer representatives.

There are four major areas of function which we will review in order to indicate some ways by which the consumers of service can be involved. They are:

1. Planning and policy determination.
2. Provision of service as employees of the service system.
3. Funding of specific programs to be directed and staffed by consumers.
4. Establishing an advocacy program within the service system.

Planning and Policy Determination. Under the impetus of the “maximum feasible participation” concept enunciated by the legislation for the Office of Economic Opportunity, a large number of institutions and other types of service systems began to appraise critically their planning and policy boards. Many thought that they had dealt with the problem of consumer representation by establishing advisory boards, either composed entirely of consumers or including a significant number. Ten years ago, this might have been perceived as a constructive step. Today, the creation of advisory bodies is seen as a delaying tactic by those who are insisting on consumer representation as a matter of right.

Advisory boards—by definition—have no power. The decision-making is left to another body of either lay or professional personnel. This is not “a piece of the action.” It is at best a belated recognition of the exclusion of those most affected by the activities of the service

system.

This may seem a harsh dismissal of a progressive idea. The fact is that the disadvantaged and the disabled must be granted some degree of power within the service system. Without the right to exercise a vote on all matters that normally are brought to a board of directors, the handicapped population served by the institution will still feel excluded and impotent.

The experience of agencies and institutions that have granted voting power to representatives of the clientele being served has, thus far, demonstrated that their presence has not destroyed the institution, nor has it limited the effectiveness of the services given. On the contrary, in many instances, the staff members and consultants have described the mutual respect and understanding that developed with the increasing candor and confidence of the total group.

The process involves destroying myths that plague not only the staff, but the client group as well. The communication problem—though not solved by any means—is lessened as the consumers' grapevine system is used to correct distortions and pass on accurate information. Distrust is reduced and the complexity of issues is brought to the awareness of the representatives of the clients who, often for the first time, realize that some solutions bring with them newer and perhaps equally difficult problems.

Community action agencies and the newer Model Cities boards have attempted to cope with at least two problems that the disadvantaged face when selected to serve on policy and planning bodies.

The first is the question of reimbursement for the expenses involved in attending meetings. This has ranged from the payment of transportation costs to babysitting services and dinners, and, in some instances, the provision of stipends. Initially, the payment of such fees may seem to violate the concept of voluntarism which serves as the basis for the participation of most board members. It may also suggest a further cooptation of the representatives, who may be seen as benefitting materially from their participation. Yet, with persons whose income is extremely limited, the cost of involvement is a serious obstacle to "engaging the system."

It seems that, at the very least, the actual expense of attending meetings ought to be reimbursed by the service system. This should cover all such costs, including the provision of care for children at home. The payment of a stipend may increase the competition for the posts involved and result in the possibility of better representation.

The second problem is that of technical assistance. Planning and policy determination require the amassing of a wealth of knowledge, the careful assessment of facts, and the analysis of options. If the consumer representatives are to play a significant role, they must be able to fathom the meaning of agenda items and the various proposals submitted by the staff or others. It may not be enough for the executive director to patiently explain the

issues.

To be effective, the consumer representatives may need to have available to them independent technical advisors whom they trust and who will assist them in examining the issues at stake and the alternative avenues for coping with them. Arrangements can be made by the service system to employ such personnel as consultants--or the representatives may be allowed to select their own consultants.

This may appear cumbersome and complicated to the person for whom even the concept of voting consumer representatives is somewhat strange. Without such help, however, the representatives may be forced to be passive observers or "rubber stamps."

There are other techniques for giving a significant role to clients within a service system. For example, a consumer board may be established which must regularly review all policy decisions for the institution or agency. In some instances where such groups exist, they have been given veto power in certain policy areas. We can expect to have many additional models of citizen involvement in planning and policy boards from experiments now being conducted by the two new major social programs established in the past five years: the community action agencies and the model cities programs.

Provision of Service as Employees of the Service System. The literature dealing with the employment of poor persons within social service organizations has mushroomed during the past few years. The concept of "new careers" is generally known and there have been numerous pioneer efforts to redefine tasks in such a way that various levels of activities are identified for persons who lack professional training. . . .

If we can redefine jobs and identify the skills needed for various levels of tasks to be performed, there ought to be opportunities for our clients to become gainfully employed within our service systems.

But we can go much further. We can create jobs that never existed before and make use of the unique skills and wisdoms of the handicapped persons with whom we work. In some instances, it will require us to recognize new roles that they can perform, precisely because they are members of a disadvantaged or disabled group.

In other instances, handicapped persons can be trained for traditional tasks to be performed in new settings. Such is the case, for example, with mothers who are being trained to provide day care in their own homes for the children of neighbors who are participating in work training.

The Federal Government has met with significant success in providing employment for mentally retarded persons under a special hiring authority established by the Civil Service Commission. In existence since 1963, this program has placed more than 5,000 mentally retarded persons in over 100 different jobs in 40 Federal agencies throughout our Nation.

The success of this program, operated with the advice of the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the State vocational rehabilitation agencies, indicates that jobs can be developed for the disabled as well as for the disadvantaged.

The one caution we would add is that the employment program should be related to an educational one. Whether we like it or not, educational institutions provide individuals with “passports” that permit mobility vertically and horizontally. No “new career” program can be deemed as valid unless it gives each participant an opportunity to climb to another level on the educational ladder. This applies as much to the person in need of a high school degree as it does to the holder of a B.A. degree.

Funding of Specific Programs To Be Directed and Staffed by Consumers. The neighborhood corporation represents another important idea for consumer involvement and consumer control. It is a logical extension of the concern we have expressed for self-help and the dignity that comes from autonomy. Rehabilitation systems may be able to adapt the same concept to their work. Are there certain activities which can best be carried out by present or former consumers? Can these activities be isolated from the rest of the program so that they can be performed independently? For example, case finding may be an important task associated with the initial phase of a rehabilitation effort. In another situation, the operation of a communal day care center may represent the first tangible assignment that can be turned over, through a subcontract, to a consumer group already existing or formed for that purpose.

We cannot underestimate the therapeutic value to a disabled or disadvantaged group of being able to operate a program--no matter how limited in scope--with total responsibility for all its aspects. Here again, technical assistance may be needed and there should be some flexibility to permit the group to make its mistakes.

In recent months, it has been suggested that poor persons can be used to provide technical assistance and support as members of consulting teams organized to assist in the development of new programs. They would not substitute for the use of competent professional personnel, but would add to the strength of the consulting or advisory team by sharing their unique perceptions and engaging other poor persons in more open dialog than would exist between professionals and poor people.

As with all other aspects, this type of citizen involvement carries with it certain risks. The desire to involve has to be placed in the context of a concern for high standards of service, careful and legitimate use of public funds, and objective evaluation. Contracts need to be drawn with care. The responsibilities of the subcontracting group must be crystal clear. Where problems have occurred, they have been largely due to confusion and a lack of legal sophistication on the part of the consumer group. Difficult as it may seem, this idea may have great value to the disabled and disadvantaged, as well as to our service systems.

Establishing an Advocacy Program Within the Service System. During the past few years, the appeals lodged by welfare recipients, dissatisfied at the decisions made by welfare workers,

have risen at a very rapid rate. The reasons for this increase are not difficult to find. A few years ago, most welfare recipients did not know that there was an appeal procedure. Those who did were often unaware of the specifics, feared retaliation, or did not have the skills to collect the sort of evidence they would need. Now, the various organizations that have focused their attention on welfare are eager to inform welfare clients of their rights and to offer consultation and legal advice if needed.

To many workers in the service system, such appeals are annoying. They waste time and create much additional paper work. In addition, an appeal seems to reflect on their competence and their ability to interpret the regulations correctly. Though the workers may agree as to the legitimacy of appeals, many find the entire process troublesome.

The reaction of welfare workers to appeals is not at all unique. Similar reactions can be found in any and every system—including the university, the Army, hospital, and the clinic. In brief, it is found in every human organization. Still, the individual needs protection and that need has never been greater than now. Confronted by a huge bureaucracy, he feels unequal to the task of protecting his rights or stating his case. He is alone—unfamiliar with the ways the system operates and the bases for the determinations of his worker. The worker seems to him to be both his adversary and judge. His perception may be distorted—but from his perspective, such distortions are understandable.

Faced with similar problems, the United States Army established a specific position—that of the inspector general. The I.G. is not part of the chain of command. He may be seen by anyone who feels he has a legitimate complaint. The I.G. is given unusual sanctions to move in and out of various parts of the army bureaucracy in order to ferret out the truth.

In Sweden, the ombudsman serves a similar function to “keep the system honest.” Established in 1809, the ombudsman is responsible to the legislature. His function is to investigate citizens’ complaints against public agencies. He is a public investigator and grievance commissioner combined, with power to investigate administrative agencies, examine their records, and call witnesses. This system has spread to other Scandinavian countries, to New Zealand, and to West Germany.

Traditionally in this country, however, the individual or group that wished to challenge a ruling on the part of an institution or agency could do so by following certain prescribed steps—but with little help from the system itself. The challengers would invariably have to turn to some outside agency or private advocate for assistance.

The disabled and disadvantaged are rarely in a position to turn to other systems for help, or to engage the services of a lawyer. If their rights are to be protected and the “system” kept honest, some new devices for this purpose must be created.

The basic premise which has to be established at the onset is that the service system is obligated to establish, sanction, and tolerate a set of well-defined procedures by which

appeals can be made and grievances heard.

The institution or agency staff will need careful training in recognizing the legitimacy of such procedures, assisting the individual or group to follow the necessary steps and withholding verbal or nonverbal disapproval of the use of this process.

Having established the premise, there seem to be two routes that can be followed in creating a program to provide consumers with advocacy services.

The first is to provide within each service system an office of advocacy, manned by a member of the staff who has both special responsibility and authority. This individual would be given the power to act within the system to make certain that his client receives the full benefit of the program of the agency. He would function as a sort of institutional public defender and be available to all who wished to "fight the system." He would have a small staff of present or former consumers to assist him.

The second alternative is to accept and encourage the role taken by some independent consumer groups as the advocates of specific clients in their disputes with the service systems. The National Welfare Rights Organization, for instance, has urged its chapters to assume such a role. In Philadelphia, the welfare rights organization has been granted the private use of an office in each of the branches of the Department of Social Services. In Baltimore, a group of welfare mothers insisted that they be provided with a copy of the manual for welfare and a telephone at a desk to be used by the welfare rights representative and advocate, within the Department of Social Services.

The major drawback to the second alternative is the need for financing. Advocacy is an expensive process, especially when dealing with individual grievances. Perhaps such advocacy structures can be funded through a subcontract to a consumer group or some other nonprofit group or corporation.

There is also a good deal of merit to the establishment of an ombudsman-type position within the service system. The latter type of advocate might be granted a great deal more power to investigate and influence decision-making than the former, though we would need to overcome the usual distrust of a public official.

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KANSAS CONVENTION
by
Beth Graber and Eileen Wilson

The first annual convention of the Sunflower Federation of the Blind was held in Topeka, Kansas, Friday through Sunday, November 14, 15 and 16. Approximately

eighty-five people attended meetings and the banquet. Twenty-one Iowans and a number of members of the Progressive Blind of Missouri joined us.

In addition to the nominating and resolutions committees there was an executive board meeting on Friday evening.

Saturday morning President Jim Coutts opened the meeting and Father George Burak, pastor of Holy Name Catholic Church in Topeka, gave the invocation. Mr. Woodburn, representing the mayor of Topeka, gave the welcoming address, with a response by Dick Edlund, second vice-president. After a report from President Jim Coutts there were reports from the secretary, treasurer, the two chapter presidents, legislative chairman and nominating committee chairman. Resolutions were read and discussed. Mr. Jim Yount, secretary of the Kansas AFL-CIO, stated that there is a shortage of skilled labor. Mr. Jim Omvig of the National Federation then asked Mr. Yount about looking into union organization for sheltered shop workers.

Afternoon reports included student activities by Jana Sims of the Progressive Blind of Missouri. Manuel Urena led the discussion which followed.

Gardner Hart of the Civil Service Commission was most encouraging with his remarks regarding the blind in Civil Service employment. After a report on the NFB Convention in Columbia, the afternoon session was concluded with talks by Ralph B. Mitchell of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and Barney Lambert of the Kansas Lion's Eye Bank.

Throughout the day various door prizes were awarded to the names drawn by Walter Long, ably assisted by Raymond Graber.

Jim Omvig is well remembered for his stirring address at the banquet Saturday night. Among the distinguished guests were State Representative Blake Williamson who spoke a few words to the group and State Senator Charles Hinchey, who was awarded a plaque for his untiring efforts in improving conditions for the blind. President Jim Coutts presented charters to the presidents of local chapters; Jim Stewart of the Kansas United Workers of the Blind and Raymond Graber of the Johnson County Chapter. Concluding the evening was a dance with music supplied by a local band.

After the invocation Sunday morning the following resolutions were read and adopted: to establish a library for the blind in the state of Kansas; to adopt the Little Randolph-Sheppard Act in Kansas; to take steps toward repealing the lien and recovery act; to support the amendments to the Federal Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stand Law; to oppose the amendment to the IRS statute now under consideration, which would give tax credits to employers who hire blind workers, to be designated as "Blue Card" employees; to take steps to secure the aid and support of organized labor to assist us in securing the right of collective bargaining for sheltered shop employees; to inform the International Testing Service of our desire for providing tests in braille and/or readers for blind students that they might compete on equal terms with their sighted peers.

Four board members were elected and Kansas City was chosen for the next convention. Delegates to the 1970 NFB Convention were elected and after adjournment a brief board meeting brought convention activities to a close.

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TOUCH AND SEE
by
Joseph M. Garvey

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from Parks & Recreation, official publication of the National Recreation and Park Association.]

Those who are blind rely on smells, sounds and textures in their discovery of nature. To a sighted person a walk through the woods may seem commonplace until he tries to describe adequately to a blind companion what he sees around him. The Touch & See Nature Trail at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., gives the blind visitor an opportunity to explore and "see" his surroundings on a path through a native hardwood forest. It is not a fragrance nor texture garden; not a complicated trail of elaborate design nor is it planted with exotic shrubs. It is a real walk through the woods.

Providing this chance for a leisurely stroll through native woodland is a fitting interest of the educational programs of the National Arboretum, an institution which otherwise places major emphasis upon plant research. The Arboretum's Touch & See Nature Trail has proven to be a very popular attraction to both sighted and blind visitors.

The trail uses to its best advantage the wood's interior where the sounds of man and machine are muted and forest life is easier to perceive. The crack of a twig, the whispering of fluttering leaves, the call of a bird, the damp smell of the bog or the warmth from the tree-filtered summer sun are amplified in the otherwise quiet and cool forest interior.

A basic necessity of a good trail is a simple layout. The National Arboretum's trail follows a winding course over undulating terrain. It is 820 feet long with features pointed out in braille and print at the twenty-four stations on either side of the trail. The visitor is led by a guide rope from one station to the next along one side of the trail and back along the other. The average time required for a blind person to make the round trip is one hour and forty-five minutes. The time element is important. If the trail is too long the visitor will tire and lose interest.

The braille embossed plastic sheets and the printed text describing each station are glued to an aluminum sheet (gauge .025) 12 x 9 inches. The use of aluminum backing allows for easy removal for reconditioning or changing of the station description without

disturbing the entire post and platform. The sheets are then affixed with a strong adhesive to a piece of marine plywood 14 x 10 x 1 inches, which in turn is mounted on redwood posts 4 x 4 inches. The posts are treated at the base with a wood preservative. The text sheets must be weather proof. Plastic materials are proving inadequate so far due to their brittleness and weathering, however, a suitable substitute for braille embossing has not been found. Since braille is read by the fingertips, it is necessary to attach text platforms in a near horizontal position. A metal photo reproduction on .020 gauge matt-finish anodized aluminum is used for the printed text.

Manila hemp, one-half inch caliper, used as a guide rope, is appropriate for the rugged woods and literally ties each station together. The guide rope connects the stations which are placed at eight-foot intervals along each side of the path. The rope is cut and knotted at each post so that the entire trail would not be affected if a section needed replacing.

The winding path is as undisturbed as possible. Underbrush was cleared to discourage the undesirable invasion of weeds into the wooded area. The trail was built as narrow as possible but wide enough for two persons to walk abreast on the earthen pathway. Wood chips, popular in many walkways, were not used here because they are not a natural floor cover of the woods.

The contrast of strong sunlight from the open area to dense shade on the path beneath the oaks provides an encounter with nature's contrasts. The touch of supple overhanging branches or the unseen brush of a leaf or pliant twig as one walks the trail adds another pleasant experience.

Features were chosen that were easy for a blind person to examine. For example, a large white oak beside the trail was chosen for its obvious saddle or crotch. The trunk of this tree is forty-eight inches in diameter. The visitor is encouraged to "hug" the large trunk and estimate its size. The oak tree has been a source of delight to visiting school children as they try to determine how many of their outstretched arms are needed to encircle its trunk.

The peeling bark and pithy wood of a rotting tree can be felt by curious hands and a text marker at the spot tells the observer that an insect may crawl over your hand as you inspect this insect apartment house.

Midway on the trail, beyond the wooded part, a meadow provides dramatic contrast to the woods. Posted instructions at the entrance advise the visitor to walk freely without fear. Here he may cross the level open grassland free of obstacles and without the necessity of a guide rope to lead him. Instead, a gravel path around the edge limits the meadow for the visitor. At the far edge of the meadow he will find a boggy spot with a willow tree and cattails. When he senses gravel underfoot, it is time to start the return journey along the trail. At the beginning of the trail a felled tree provides a new experience. The visitor is encouraged to "climb" this tree, hand over hand, to sense the bark texture and the tree's large branches.

The call of a crow, the smell of fresh dampness, and the sound of a snapping twig are exclusive experiences to the blind visitor to the Touch & See Nature Trail. To be able to enjoy a leisurely walk through the woods should not be reserved for the sighted. At the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., the Touch & See Nature Trail welcomes blind visitors to the wonders of the forest.

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MIXED LEGISLATIVE RESULTS IN IOWA:
AMERICAN COUNCIL ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT PROGRAM
by
The Editors

During the past twelve years the blind of the State of Iowa have achieved an unbroken record of progress and advancement. From one of the poorest in the nation, the Iowa Commission for the Blind (under the able leadership of NFB President Kenneth Jernigan) has become one which has gained national and world recognition. Blind Iowans are working in an ever-growing variety of jobs and have begun to provide leadership in programs for the blind in a number of other states. The Iowa Library is unique among libraries for the blind. Only in existence since 1960, it is generally recognized today as the largest, best equipped library for the blind in the country. Its standards of service have kept pace with its physical expansion, and its staff continually provides consultation to other states and nations.

The legislative gains made by Iowa's organized blind have been equally impressive. Last year Iowa enacted what is undoubtedly the strongest Little Randolph-Sheppard Act ever to go on the statute books of any state. Also the Iowa Legislature in 1969 adopted a minimum presumed need of \$140 per month for blind aid recipients. In 1967 the entire Model White Cane Law was passed. The harmony and cooperation between a progressive state agency and a vital, alert state affiliate have been key factors in this phenomenal progress.

In short, the Iowa programs for the blind have become a symbol of hope and confidence for blind people everywhere—a standard by which to measure performance—a landmark of excellence.

In this context it is not difficult to understand why many blind Iowans have felt for a number of years that the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School (located at Vinton) should be administered by the Commission for the Blind. Surveys in 1968 by outside educational experts, as well as studies made by the University Association of the Blind, indicated serious academic and philosophical shortcomings in the School. The past three conventions of the Iowa Association of the Blind, representing a membership of approximately five hundred, have given particular attention to problems at the School and indicated mounting concern.

In October of 1969, by action of its Board of Directors, the Association decided to ask the 1970 Legislature to transfer jurisdiction of the School from the State Board of Regents

to the Iowa Commission for the Blind. The Commission joined the Association in requesting the transfer and said, in part, in a statement released in November:

The Board of Regents is primarily concerned with and responsible for institutions of higher learning, involving expenditures of many tens of millions of dollars per year and planning for many tens of thousands of students. The School at Vinton (with a budget of a few hundred thousand dollars per year and a student body of slightly more than one hundred) cannot really receive much attention from the Regents or their Central Office staff. Not only can very little time be given, but the Regents and their Central Office staff are not likely to have or develop any real expertise or understanding of the problems involved.

The Commission for the Blind, on the other hand, devotes its full time and attention to the problems of blindness. It has a member of the organized blind on its Board and is in close touch with blind people throughout the state. It has achieved international recognition for its work in rehabilitation, library services, and the total range of assistance to the blind. Its administrative staff contains people qualified in the education of blind children, and it is reasonable to expect excellent results if the School should become part of the Commission.

In any case the present situation should not be permitted to continue. It is wasteful of manpower and resources. Most important, it is harmful to the blind children at the School and does damage to all blind people in the state.

The situation was further complicated by the fact that a new superintendent (the fourth in nine years) came to the School late in the summer of 1969. His statements indicated that the emphasis of the School would increasingly be on the multiply handicapped blind child rather than the achieving of overall educational excellence for all blind children. It seemed to the blind that his philosophy was one of custodialism and care instead of the newer concepts of innate normality and equal opportunity, which put him in direct conflict with the philosophy of the Federation and the Commission.

Late in November the story of the impending legislative struggle broke into the press with an increasing flood of articles and editorial comment. The Board of Regents with all its resources, plus a few dissident blind persons and a number of parents of blind children at the School (most of whom had never even met the Commission Director or visited the Commission), attempted to submerge all issues in a bitter personal attack upon Kenneth Jernigan, Director of the Commission. It is, of course, standard practice for people who do not have issues or who cannot criticize programs to make personal attacks. Even the most bitter opponents of the transfer never attempted to deny the excellence of the Commission's programs.

As December advanced each new day brought increasing fury. When the Iowa Legislature met January 12, a bill to effect the transfer of jurisdiction was ready for introduction into both houses. It carried fifty House cosponsors out of a total of one

hundred and twenty-four members and thirty cosponsors in the sixty-one member Senate.

By Thursday, January 15, so much name calling and bitterness had occurred that the Board of the Iowa Commission for the Blind released a statement to the press:

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Adopted by the Board of the Iowa Commission for the Blind

Over the years the Iowa Commission for the Blind has continuously sought cooperation with the Board of Regents to achieve a unified program for the education, training, and rehabilitation of the blind. For quite some time it has been apparent that such coordination and cooperation cannot be achieved under the present system. Accordingly, the Board of the Commission--after seeking the views of blind persons throughout the state--decided last fall to join with the organized blind of Iowa in asking the current session of the Legislature to place administrative control of the Iowa Braille and and Sight Saving School at Vinton under the Commission.

Under the imaginative leadership of Kenneth Jernigan, the Director of the Commission, Iowa's programs for the blind have achieved national and world recognition. The Board of the Commission feels that the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School will achieve similar excellence if it becomes part of the over-all Commission program. The achievement of the maximum potential of each child at the School--whether such child be totally blind or partially sighted, multiply handicapped or not--is the objective which the Commission seeks. There should be a strong academic program at the School, as well as an emphasis on skills and techniques and a building of self-confidence in each student.

As far as the Board of the Commission for the Blind is concerned, this is the real issue--and the only issue--which should now be considered. The Board of the Commission deplores the personal attacks which have been made upon the Commission Director and feels that personalities should have no place in the decision which must be made. The statements of the Director of the Commission concerning this issue have been made pursuant to the policy and directives of the Commission Board. Let there be no doubt that the Board of the Commission is solidly behind the Director. Mr. Jernigan is eminently qualified by education and experience for his duties, but more than that, having been blind from birth, he has the understanding knowledge of the needs of the person who, lacking sight, must live in a predominantly sighted world.

We of the Commission Board wonder what motivates the obsession on the part of the Regents to hold on to the Vinton School. Our motive, as we have stated, is to bring the blind programs under one agency. If this is done, we are confident that soon the School will enjoy the same national and worldwide reputation for excellence as does the programs of this Commission.

William Wimer, Chairman

Elwyn Hemken, Member

Nell (Mrs. Wayne E.) Bonnell, Member

On January 16, the situation was further complicated by the arrival in Iowa of two out-of-state organizers from the American Council of the Blind--Reese Robrahn and George Card. IAB President Neil Butler issued the news bulletin which follows concerning the situation:

Late Friday an apparently straight-forward and innocent announcement was made by a Waterloo resident that a number of blind people had decided to withdraw from the Iowa Association of the Blind and establish a separate organization because the Iowa Association of the Blind was dominated by the Iowa Commission for the Blind. This apparent innocence covers a devious story of intrigue which all Iowans should ponder.

In the late 1950's, Mr. George Card of Wisconsin was Vice President of the National Federation of the Blind. He was succeeded in that office by Kenneth Jernigan, who is now Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. Many people felt that Mr. Card never recovered from the bitterness which he demonstrated at this turn of events. He subsequently and without success tried in every way possible to ruin the reputation of Mr. Jernigan. He went up and down the nation making character attacks and unfounded charges. In 1961, he came to Iowa and claimed membership in the Iowa Association of the Blind, although he had never been a resident of the State. He tried to take control of the Iowa Association of the Blind convention but failed. Later in 1961 he and a small faction of disgruntled blind people were expelled from the National Federation of the Blind because of their disruptive tactics and slanderous statements. Among others this faction included a man named Reese Robrahn, from Kansas. The faction later established a small so-called national organization named the American Council of the Blind. In 1963, Mr. Card sent a scurrilous letter to Iowa containing vicious charges and innuendoes concerning Mr. Jernigan which was circulated among members of the Iowa Legislature by the then Superintendent of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School.

On Friday afternoon, January 16, 1970, at shortly past 5 o'clock, Mr. Card arrived at the Cedar Rapids airport and was met by officials of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School. Later in the evening, Mr. Robrahn arrived at the airport to be met by these same people, employees of the Board of Regents. At a meeting to be held in Cedar Rapids on Saturday, January 17, officials of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, acting for the Regents and with the help of discredited and disgruntled out-of-staters, apparently intended to establish their so-called

independent, undominated organization of the blind. In other words, when the Board of Regents could not meet the issues raised by the blind of Iowa concerning the question of transferring the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School to the Commission for the Blind, they called in out-of-staters and collected what dissident blind people they could to form an organization. The truth is that the Iowa Association of the Blind has many hundreds of members and wholeheartedly supports the transfer of administration of the school.

The Regents would seem to be using all their power and resources to collect dissident blind persons and to bring in out-of-staters to try to pull their chestnuts out of the fire. The overwhelming majority of blind Iowans resent this devious action and doubt that the Legislature and public of Iowa will take kindly to it.

The Iowa Association of the Blind feels that the past 11 years of accomplishment of the Iowa Commission for the Blind will speak louder than the years of failure to run a good school by the Regents, their four months of promises with a new superintendent, and their array of out-of-state talent. We rest our case with these words: Carpetbaggers, go back to your own states. Iowa can run its own business and make its own decisions without your interference. Regents, fight your own battles and stop trying to use a few dissident blind adults and innocent blind children and their parents as pawns in your game. Meet the issues squarely if you can, but be brave enough to do it in your own name.

The organizing meeting of the Iowa Council of the Blind was held in Cedar Rapids on January 17. It seemed to be thoroughly dominated by Regents employees (especially officials of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School) and by the out-of-staters. Although the group claimed to have one hundred and ten members, reliable estimates indicate that only about thirty-five blind persons were present, many of them employees of the School. Sylvester Nemmers, IAB Legislative Chairman, described what happened to him in the following release:

January 19, 1970

To: The Members of the Legislature

I am a blind person earning my own living. Last Saturday, January 17, 1970, I went to Cedar Rapids with the intention of attending a meeting which I had understood was to be held to form an organization of the blind. There were about 65 people present, and I believe only half of them or less were blind persons. Two of these blind people were out-of-staters who had been brought to the meeting.

Along with several other blind people, I was told that I could not come in, and a guard with a pistol on his hip was at the door to keep me out. I was told I did not have a ticket, but a sighted employee of the Regents who works at the Vinton School did not have a ticket but was admitted, as was Senator Minette Doderer, whose husband is also an employee of the Regents.

The organization elected a Regents' employee from the School for the Deaf as its president with two Regents' employees on its nominating committee. The new president and others at the meeting said that the organization was formed as a protest against the Iowa Association for the Blind, which was said to be undemocratic and dominated by the Iowa Commission for the Blind.

Yet, the Iowa Association of the Blind has hundreds of members, has never held a closed meeting, and has never denied membership to any Iowa resident who wished to join.

The new so-called "undominated, democratic" organization contains a few blind people, holds a secret meeting, excludes blind persons by use of an armed guard, elects a Regents' employee as president, and admits a sighted senator with a Regents-employed husband.

The public and the members of the General Assembly should question what the Regents have to hide if they must go to these lengths. The Regents may be desperate, but do they need armed guards with pistols to defend themselves against the blind? If they are allowed to get away with this, what kind of future can those of us who are blind expect?

Before admitting an individual to the meeting, officials of the new organization required a signed application stating that the person was not an employee of the Commission and was not a member of, or would pledge to resign immediately from, the Iowa Association of the Blind. Even with these restrictions, applications were issued only to a handpicked few since no voting "majority" of the blind people who would have been present could have been obtained otherwise. The whole focus of the meeting was a personal attack upon Commission Director Jernigan and the passage of a resolution which recommended that he be fired and that the books of the Commission be audited. (Mr. Jernigan later commented that his books are audited every year.)

It subsequently developed that the forces opposing the transfer were going outside of Iowa to try to line up support from certain agencies which have traditionally been hostile to the organized blind movement. It did not seem to matter to the people involved that excellent programs for the blind were being jeopardized or that the blind of the state were being harmed by the innuendoes and name-calling in the press.

As January drew to a close, officials of the Commission began to question whether in the atmosphere which had been created the transfer of the jurisdiction of the School would be constructive. It seemed undesirable to prolong the bitter public controversy even though it was clear that enough legislative support existed to pass the bill. The battle would have been long and increasingly destructive of all programs in the state, Commission and School alike.

Under the circumstances an alternative solution was desirable. Accordingly, negotiations took place with Iowa's able Governor, Robert Ray. At a news conference on Friday morning, January 30, Governor Ray (who has always staunchly supported the programs of the Commission and the activities of the Iowa organized blind) made the following statement:

Today I am asking the 63rd General Assembly to withdraw from consideration both the bill which would transfer the Iowa Braille and Sight-Saving School from the Board of Regents to the Commission for the Blind, and the concurrent resolution proposing a legislative study of the entire issue.

I have conferred on this matter with the Chairman of the Commission for the Blind, the Director of the Commission for the Blind, the Chairman of the Board of Regents, and the Superintendent of the Braille and Sight-Saving School. All of them concur in my recommendation, and all have assured me that they will cooperate wholeheartedly to establish and maintain close, harmonious working relations between the Commission and the Vinton School.

To assure the implementation of this agreement I shall promptly constitute the Director and Chairman of the Commission, the Chairman of the Regents, the Superintendent of the School and one of my staff as an ad hoc working committee to devise, develop and carry out specific arrangements for cooperative activity in all areas of mutual responsibility by both the Blind Commission and the School.

As Governor I intend to bring an immediate halt to the vitriolic and, in my opinion, extremely damaging statements which have erupted on both sides of this jurisdictional dispute. The words of bitterness have been harmful to all Iowa but, as unfortunately is often the case, those whose interests are at stake have suffered the most.

The essence of the American spirit is that "something human is dearer . . . than all the wealth of the universe," as some wise man said a long time ago. This is the motivating force in all our public and private efforts in education, social services, and the whole spectrum of rehabilitation activities.

From time to time individuals and groups most zealous in their dedication to this ideal may be caught up by an emotional tide which can sweep away all of the progress which they have painstakingly and slowly achieved. When that kind of tragedy threatens, people of good will--especially those in positions of responsibility--have an obligation to stem the tide, quiet the emotions, and safeguard the useful works which are menaced.

We stand in that position today with reference to our sightless and partly sighted fellow Iowans. Their welfare is jeopardized by what might be termed a domestic

relations problem between the Commission and the School.

Yet the objectives of both are the same: to free the blind and partly blind from imprisonment in physical darkness, and to make them full participants with the rest of us in the world of opportunity and achievement.

Because of my pride that Iowa has accomplished so much in its aid to the visually handicapped, and my determination that gains shall continue to be made, I have given this problem much time and thought.

I have great respect for and confidence in Kenneth Jernigan, Director of the Commission for the Blind, certainly one of the most gifted public servants that Iowa has ever had in any field. Just now completing twelve years here, Mr. Jernigan has brought Iowa national recognition as a trail-blazing pioneer in successful work for the blind. I subscribe wholeheartedly to his philosophy that blindness--and other handicaps--need not mean helplessness, and that the blind--with suitable training and opportunity--can become fully functioning human beings in any endeavor. This is much more than theory; Mr. Jernigan has proven it in practice; the achievements of Iowa's blind also attest to its effectiveness.

I have visited, and tried to acquaint myself with the operation of, the Braille and Sight-Saving School at Vinton.

The School is relatively small, with fewer than 200 pupils from kindergarten through high school. It is operated on the residential plan, but about one-half of the students go home most weekends, and no charge is made for board, room, tuition, laundry or educational supplies, all of which are financed by state appropriation. For the past quarter-century there has been an instructional program at Vinton for the partly sighted as well as the blind, and each year some graduates, under the sponsorship and guidance of the Commission, go on to vocational schools or colleges.

The Vinton School has for years enjoyed the advantages of stability and prestige under the Board of Regents, and I am confident that we can, with Dr. Frank Rocco's new program and leadership, achieve outstanding results there.

The present friction has developed in part from the rapid growth in size, scope and acceptance which the Commission has enjoyed since 1958, and especially since the Rehabilitation Center was opened in the former Des Moines Y.M.C.A. Building at Fourth and Keo. Basically, however, the friction has been generated by a difference in philosophical emphasis between the Commission and the School. Any philosophical difference has been unhappily increased--in my judgment--by the difficulty, if not the total breakdown, of communication between enthusiastic supporters of both groups.

The loyalty of both sides to their respective viewpoints is attested by the large volume of both oral and written expressions which have come to me and members of the General Assembly since legislation was proposed to transfer the School to the Commission for the Blind. This issue has aroused enormous emotional intensity because it touches three areas in which human beings are properly most sensitive: (1) education, (2) youth, and (3) the handicapped.

I am convinced that the best interests of education, youth and the handicapped require us now to return to the first principle that "something human" must not be lost in a rising crescendo of angry voices. Heated passions must not be permitted to jeopardize the great gains which have been won by Iowa's sightless and partly sighted. Their welfare--and, hence, the welfare of the whole state--can now be most wisely served by lowering voices, suspending argument, and getting on with the programs which suffer from current conflict.

Governor Ray's remarks were followed by a statement from Kenneth Jernigan, Director of the Commission:

After consulting with the members of the Board of the Commission for the Blind, I am authorized to make the following statement:

As you know, we of the Commission have felt for some time that the best interests of the blind of Iowa would be served by a transfer of the administration of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School from the Board of Regents to the Commission for the Blind. We believe that proposal was constructive and philosophically sound.

In our estimation this would have resulted in a more coordinated program for the blind and the visually handicapped of Iowa. It is recognized, we believe, that the rehabilitation, library and other programs of the Commission have been successful, and that the state has been able to point to them with pride.

Our only interest in this matter from the very outset has been the promotion of the well-being of the blind children and adults of the state.

Yet we agree with Governor Ray that so much emotion has been generated on both sides of the question, and so much misinformation has resulted, that instead of helping those we wish to serve, an opposite condition is developing.

Even though we think that sufficient legislative support exists to pass the bill, we believe placing the School under the Commission in the present atmosphere would neither be constructive nor wise.

Under the circumstances we consider this issue closed. We would hope that the

Iowa Association of the Blind and others who have supported the transfer will also now consider it closed.

We hail the Governor's proposal to work out any problems through rational communication and reasonable negotiation, and we pledge ourselves to work with the Governor's ad hoc committee in a spirit of cooperation and understanding.

Next, a statement was made by Stanley Redeker, president of the Board of Regents:

We are pleased that Governor Ray has taken these most appropriate steps to encourage a close and harmonious working relationship between the Iowa Commission for the Blind and the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School.

We give every assurance that we will cooperate fully in achieving a standard of excellence that will be of major benefit to all Iowans.

We are hopeful that the General Assembly will concur with the Governor's recommendations. Their prompt action in support of this approach will allow us to begin immediately on this very important joint endeavor.

Officials of the Commission and leaders of the organized blind of Iowa hope that the new committee proposed by the Governor will make real headway in coordinating the activities of the School with the overall program of the Commission. If there is a genuine effort on both sides, and if the dissidents (who like controversy for its own sake) behave at all responsibly, then the prospects for success may be good.

To those in the National Federation of the Blind who have said over the years that cooperation with the American Council of the Blind might be possible and desirable, this story should be a lesson. The NFB has never in its organizing efforts attempted to destroy the programs for the blind of any state. It has never combined with hostile agencies to try to attack American Council officials. In fact when the NFB has gone into a state with an ACB affiliate it has never attacked that affiliate or attempted to besmirch the character and reputation of its leaders. When Kansas, the home state of the current ACB president, was organized, no personal attacks were made. Instead a positive program was planned for the betterment of all the blind of that state.

It would seem clear that some ACB officials still harbor hatred and a desire for revenge because of their failures in the NFB during the time of its crisis a decade ago. Vengeance and hatred are corrosive to a man or to a movement and do not contain the constructive elements necessary to build a positive way of life. The NFB has put the civil war far behind it and intends to keep it that way and will continue to move to higher grounds in the achievement of better conditions for the blind of the nation.

The doubts of Federationists about the goals of some of the dissident leaders during the civil war and of the methods used to reach those goals, have now been clarified and

affirmed. Apropos of such methods and goals, it will be interesting to observe the accuracy and restraint (or lack of restraint) which will be used by the ACB in reporting this matter in its publications. In the Iowa incident the leadership of the American Council of the Blind would seem to have shown their true colors. This incident will undoubtedly delay and impede the cooperative relationship which should be brought into being between the two organizations and which was already beginning. In the decade of the 70's as all programs for the blind try to avoid being submerged in the giant melting pot of services to the larger group of the disadvantaged, there should be little time for internecine strife and the luxury of petty personal politics.

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BLINDNESS AMONG DIABETICS INCREASES

by

Marge Davenport

[Editor's Note: The Following story appeared in the Portland, Oregon Journal.]

Blindness is increasing in the United States. The proportion of blind persons in the population is up twenty-five per cent during the past two decades, despite many medical advances and improved treatment of some forms of eye disease.

The most serious increase is in the number of persons with diabetes who go blind, according to leading eye experts speaking to the University of Oregon Medical School Eye Alumni Conference.

Blindness among diabetics has increased one thousand per cent, says Dr. John E. Harris, head of the department of ophthalmology at the University of Minnesota.

During a preconference interview, Dr. Harris pointed out that, so far, ophthalmologists do not have proved methods of treatment for diabetic retinophthomy--the condition that causes the diabetic person to lose his sight. He said the treatment that is considered best to control loss of sight in diabetics is photocoagulation--the treatment of affected places on the eye's retina with light beams or laser.

During his visit in Portland, Dr. Harris consulted with Dr. Kenneth Swan, his former mentor who is chairman of the UOMS ophthalmology department, about a 700-person study to determine the effectiveness of this type of therapy. Dr. Swan says he hopes UOMS can be one of the twelve medical centers to participate in the investigations.

"Persons with diabetes usually develop symptoms of the eye disease within seventeen years of the known onset of their diabetes. It starts gradually, but about fifty per cent are legally blind within five years," Dr. Harris said. The eye expert attributes the increase in the number of blind diabetics to increased survival times that have come with better medical management of the disease.

He predicts that by 1980 blindness associated with diabetes will be the leading cause of blindness, surpassing glaucoma and cataract, which are now listed as the leading causes. Glaucoma is treated by eye drop medication and other medical therapy, and many forms of cataracts can be treated by surgical removal.

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MEET OUR STATE PRESIDENT--
ALFONSO SMITH

AND OUR STATE AFFILIATE--
OHIO

Alfonso Smith has been President of the Ohio Council of the Blind for the past two years and is now serving his third term. He was preceded in this office by Frank Jasinski (1947), Harry Stiller (1948), Clyde Ross (1949-1963) and George Bonsky (1963-1967). Smith was a charter member and one of the organizers of the Youngstown Council of the Blind, an Ohio Council affiliate, and he is familiar with this organization at every level, having been elected president five times and having served in all of its offices except that of secretary. In the state organization he has held the offices of first vice-president and second vice-president in addition to his present office and he has served on its Resolution, Legislative, and Broom Shop Committees. He is a newly elected member of the NFB Executive Committee.

Alfonso Smith was born November 1, 1913 in Coosa County, Alabama but was raised and schooled in Youngstown, Ohio where his family settled in 1917. He graduated from Rayen High School in 1933. His blindness is a result of scarlet fever at the age of thirteen and the gradual deterioration of vision until age twenty-six. Before rehabilitation at the Ohio Commission for the Blind in 1945 where he learned his trade of broom making Smith worked for construction companies. As an independent businessman he owned and operated the Steel City Broom Company for thirteen years. The Youngstown Society for the Blind hired him as a supervisor to train men in his trade eleven years ago. A strong believer in

personal dignity and self-reliance, Smith believes that each person has a human worth which should be developed to the greatest extent of his ability.

In June, 1938 Smith married Amanda Wallace and they have three daughters and two grandsons. His interests include sports, having played both baseball and football, fishing, reading, and an avid interest in legislation. He is a board member of the Ohio Chapter of the AAWB and the McGuffey Center, Inc.

In 1940, when seven states gathered in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania to form the National Federation of the Blind, Ohio was represented by Glenn Hoffman. Ohio is proud to have been a charter member of the NFB. Because the Ohio Federation of the Blind was not growing leaders of the blind gathered in Canton in 1946 to draft a constitution that would set forth the real goals of the Ohio blind. In January, 1947 a convention was held in Columbus and from this issued the Ohio Council of the Blind with five chartered affiliates.

With the help of the Ohio Lions the OCB got the White Cane Law enacted. It secured a \$200.00 yearly medical benefit before the arrival of Medicaid and Medicare and it helped in the abolition of the twelve-day hospital tenure. The OCB blocked a bill to permit the publication of names of public assistance recipients as well as a bill that would have permitted the wholesale and retail of fireworks without a license. When title XVI of the Social Security Act took effect, lumping all public assistance under one head, the OCB was able to save the separate law for Aid to the Blind recipients. The OCB was also instrumental in defeating a bill to combine the handicapped under one commission. The Council helped reduce residence requirements from three years to one year before the decision of the Supreme Court. Recently the OCB prevented the building of a superhighway through the grounds of the Ohio State Schools for the Blind and Deaf.

To inform the blind of Ohio about the goals and achievements of the NFB, Alfonso Smith arranged regional meetings in four sections of Ohio. National Federationists such as John Nagle, Chief of the Washington Office, Jim Omvig of the Iowa Commission and Bob Whitehead, Executive Board Member from Kentucky spoke and answered questions at these meetings. People who had never attended state or national conventions were exposed by these seminars to NFB philosophy. The OCB hopes in the future to get the Model White Cane Law and the Little Randolph-Sheppard Act passed. Other goals are the advancement of H.R. 3782 in Congress and the establishment of a commission for the blind in Ohio.

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ANOTHER BLIND TEACHER MAKES IT

by
Michael Fallon

{Editor's Note: The following story is reprinted from the Sacramento (California) Union, originally headed "Rose-Colored View of Blindness".}

No student has thrown a spitball in one of Joe DeWitt's history classes at Davis Senior High School for four years. Not since he became blind.

"The students are better behaved for me than they are usually with a sighted person,"

DeWitt said in an interview.

“I’ve had a reduced discipline problem compared to what I had before.

“Another thing reduced, I think, is cheating. Kids are put on their honor—and kids do have honor, despite what we adults may think of them.”

These are some of the compensations DeWitt has found in his teaching career since the retinas of his eyes became overgrown by blood vessels, “as if you had a vine growing over your window.”

DeWitt, a solidly built, conservatively dressed man with wavy steel-gray hair, taught industrial arts at Davis High for thirteen years until his eyesight failed to the point where he could distinguish only shadowy shapes and bright light from darkness.

Walking on the campus, DeWitt carries a red, white and black cane, about the height of a shepherd’s staff, that “gives information on what’s ahead of me for two steps ahead. A lot of people don’t see much further than that anyway,” he said good naturedly on a stroll to the school cafeteria. . . .

Blindness, he felt, did not affect the “prime thing” for a teacher, the “ability to communicate with human beings.”

Spontaneity and give-and-take in his classroom history discussions have not been affected, DeWitt said, largely because “high school kids are much better with a blind person than adults. They’re more willing to accept blindness. They’re not so afraid of it. They handle it gracefully. If there’s a confrontation, they’re able to laugh it off. I attribute this to their youthful flexibility.”

DeWitt’s own experience led him to take a leadership role in the Blind Teachers of California, a new organization that represents eighty-five active blind teachers who serve sighted students from kindergarten to college. One is a high school wrestling coach. The organization was formed by Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant, a “fiery little lady in Los Angeles who was told she couldn’t teach any more after becoming blind. There was a hassle, and she won out.” DeWitt said the group has sought to persuade school administrators all over the state to consider qualified blind applicants, and also to “educate the sighted to understand and be at ease with the blind. At present, we’re seeing an awakening,” he said. “More blind people are being successfully employed than ever before.” DeWitt acknowledged that with a blind teacher, some special classroom arrangements were necessary. “I tell my students, ‘Be like your congressman. Don’t hold your hand up. Address the chair.’

“A student instead of nodding his head, has to say, ‘Yes, I understand.’ ”

DeWitt gets assistance from a University of California, Davis, student who reads to him students’ homework assignments and examinations. One student in each of his classes is

assigned to take attendance, read school notices and handle some paper work.

In addition to his teaching duties, DeWitt serves as a counselor and as supervisor of the campus work experience program. Under the program, students receive academic credit—but no pay—for jobs they undertake in the cafeteria, snack bar, bookstore, gymnasium and school office.

Principal Richard Mansfield said DeWitt had a “good relationship” with the work experience students, in part because the teacher made them realize “here’s a man with no eyes who’s making a go of it.” Mansfield said he “wasn’t sure,” at the outset of DeWitt’s postblindness teaching career, that DeWitt was “going to be able to bring it off” and offered parents the opportunity to withdraw their youngsters. “The parents rose up as one and said, ‘No. We want them to have this experience,’ ” the principal recalled.

Mansfield said that occasionally at the start of the semester, a student in one of DeWitt’s classes has reported that another student—usually a newcomer—has been out of line. “It’s fantastic how this works. They’ll go back and take it on themselves to bring the other kids into line. After the first two or three weeks, there’s no more of this nonsense.”

A key attribute which Mansfield finds in DeWitt is “a tremendous sense of humor, the ability to see humor in a lot of the things that happen to him.”

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NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE CONVENTION

by

William Higgins

September 27, 1969, saw members from the Gate City Chapter of Nashua and members of the Merrimack Valley Chapter of Concord and Manchester heading for the hills of Berlin in the northern part of the state for a two-day state convention.

After the confusion of getting settled, the convention opened with President Alfred Beckwith presiding. The “Welcome to the City” was given by Senator Lamontagne of Berlin, New Hampshire. The President gave his report, talked on the stand program, legislation and other matters pertaining to the state chapter. Our state chapter has been saddened by the death of two of its members, Minnie Staples of the Merrimack Valley Chapter and Lina King, who at the time of her death was President of the Gate City Chapter.

A panel discussion was held and the topic was “Services to the Blind.” The panel consisted of Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, National President, Glenn Eastman of the Community Action Program for Grafton and Coos County, and Franklin VanVliet of Penacook, who is

also the National Treasurer. It was a most interesting discussion and several questions were asked following the presentation. This concluded the first day's business. Before the banquet, Senator Lamontagne and Mr. VanVliet had challenged each other in a snowshoe race in front of the hotel. NO, there was no snow but there sure were a lot of laughs and it really was fun!! Frank won; I think he tripped the Senator but they both disagree. In fact, the Senator blames the writer of this article for tripping him, but A delicious banquet was served and our National President Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, the guest speaker, gave a very interesting and enlightening address. It was the first time this writer had ever had the pleasure of hearing him, and he is really dynamic and always puts his point across with much vigor.

Later many of us went to a local club, The Chalet, for some good fellowship and dancing.

The second day of the convention President Beckwith conducted the usual business including the election of a board member. William Higgins, President of the Merrimack Valley Chapter, was elected to serve for a three-year term.

Following a discussion of state fundraising projects, the President named William Higgins as chairman. It was decided to hold the 1970 convention in Manchester and the 1971 convention in Keene.

All in all it was a good convention with good member participation. From the many good reports, we can be proud of the growth of the state chapter and look forward to an even better convention in 1970.

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AN UNUSUAL BUSINESS

by

Roberta Ethridge Allen

[Editor's Note: The following article is taken from Performance, the publication of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.]

Isaac Handley's neat business cards, imprinted in gold, reveal that he makes and sells "Monuments of Character"--concrete grave monuments. His unique business in Brinkley, Arkansas, meets a public need both within and outside the state.

Handley is a very active citizen in spite of his lack of sight, which he lost in World War II. He went through the usual period of frustration and helplessness. However, while reorienting himself and realizing that he could not continue his regular work as a concrete

finisher, he served where needed in his community. He did not allow his handicap and fourth-grade education to be stumbling blocks.

"It took me fifteen years to get that," he told his visitor, referring to the card indicating that he had achieved the highest degrees in his lodge. He is a deacon of his church, and holds office in the school PTA as well as the chairmanship of a local Boy Scout troop.

At the high school, he represents the Arkansas Public Health Association by counseling with individual students in regard to matters of health and personal hygiene.

About the time his son entered college and his little girl was growing toward school age, Handley decided that he must apply to the Veteran's Administration for vocational rehabilitation. His VA counselor felt that he should have some prevocational and adjustment training, and in 1964, Handley was sent to the blind restoration center at Hines Veterans' Hospital in Chicago.

Within the six weeks spent at Hines, Handley was instructed in the use of the Braille code for touch reading and writing; improved his mobility by use of the white cane; learned how to use various power tools and machinery safely; and how to better care for his personal needs. His eagerness to learn and rapid progress earned him a Diploma of Proficiency for Training. At the center, his experience leading counselling sessions with other patients has enabled him to better serve his home community.

Much thought was given by Handley and his VA counselors to the new vocation best for him. He wanted to do something utilizing his previous experience in concrete work.

Although grave monuments today are usually made of marble or granite, a funeral director suggested to Handley that concrete monuments would fill a definite need in his area. This made the idea more appealing, but Handley was not confident that he could make them satisfactorily.

His previous experience in finishing concrete would serve him well, but there were several problems to be solved before he could rely on this as his occupation. His personal VA counselor contacted a number of monument makers before he located Clyde Holstead of the Pocahontas Monument Works who was convenient to Brinkley, and who—after a visit with Handley—felt that he could teach him and help solve his special problems.

Holstead was able to design hinged metal forms which proved more efficient and satisfactory for removing freshly formed monuments. He also devised a system for Handley to make the inscriptions. Raised metal letters and numerals are set in forms similar to the way a hand printer sets his type. The inscription can then be pressed into the fresh concrete when it is firm but not hard.

The teacher found his pupil one of the most eager he had ever taught, and worked with Handley three or four months, twice a week at first and then only once a week.

Handley orders white sand by truck from Memphis for his concrete. At first, he mixed the concrete in a wheelbarrow with a hoe and used a bucket for pouring in the water. Last year, he obtained a power operated mixer which fits nicely into his large, neat workshop back of his home. The mixer is easily rolled from one location to another for mixing or pouring the concrete into the forms.

The completed monuments, between two and three feet in height, weigh from fifty to a hundred pounds and the average price is around \$40. Handley keeps on display six or seven monuments of different design, but he can fill orders to specifications. He has sold them in Mississippi and Tennessee as well as in Arkansas.

In his new vocation, Handley's wife can assist him in some ways (particularly in patterning the inscriptions), but he is anxious to employ other handicapped persons as needed and has had one such employee.

When he has opportunity to advise other handicapped persons, Handley's philosophy is, "Never give in to a handicap; be useful."

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MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The National Federation of Music Clubs is offering eight \$100.00 Scholarships to Blind Students; two will be awarded in each of the four NFMC Regions. Applicants must be a member of the Junior Division, either in a Federated Junior Club or as a Junior Special Member, dues having been paid by February 1st and must not have reached 19th birthday by March 1st.

Applicant shall send a tape of the selections on which the judging is to be based, accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the entrant's teacher, and an affidavit from the attending ophthalmologist stating the entrant is "officially blind" with 20/200 or less vision after correction.

The tape, letter of recommendation, and the ophthalmologist's affidavit shall be sent, by the deadline of the Junior Festival in entrant's area, to:

Central Region — Mrs. Dwight D. Robinson, 7 Ransom Road, Athens, Ohio 45701

Northeastern Region — Mrs. Gerald Q. Decker, 100 Seaside Place, Sea Girt, New Jersey 08750

Southeastern Region — Mrs. Harold G. Deal, 375 4th Street NW, Hickory, North Carolina 28601

Western Region — Miss Nielsine M. Nielsen, 26 10th Street NW, Hampton, Iowa 50441

The Regional Chairmen, after checking qualifications, will have the tapes heard by competent judges in her area. The tapes and pertinent data of the two entrants receiving the highest rating, with judges' signed comments, shall be sent to the National Chairman by March 31, 1970.

Awards for Blind Composers

Blind Composers between the ages of ten to sixteen and from sixteen to thirty may submit their compositions in manuscript, together with data as required above (Scholarships), to the National Chairman. These compositions will be adjudicated by composers of merit. All compositions will be returned with judges' signed comments. All entrants must be members of a Junior, Student, or Senior Club or a Special Member.

A \$100.00 Award will be given to the entrant receiving the highest rating in the ten to sixteen age group. A \$200.00 Award will be given to the entrant receiving the highest rating in the sixteen to thirty year group.

Scholarships and Awards will be offered annually hereafter.

Committee: Mrs. Harold G. Deal	Mrs. Glenn W. Morrison
Mrs. Gerald Q. Decker	Miss Nielsine M. Nielsen
Mrs. Lloyd B. Mielenz	Mrs. Dwight D. Robinson
Mrs. G. Franklin Onion, Chairman	

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MORE NOTES ON POSTAGE FREE MAILING FOR THE BLIND

by
Florence Grannis

[Editor's Note: Mrs. Grannis is Assistant Director in Charge of Library and Social Services for the Blind, Iowa Commission for the Blind.]

After my articles on "Postage free mailing for the blind" in the March 1969 issue of The Braille Monitor and the article on "postage free mailing for the blind--subsequent developments" in the November 1969 issue of The Braille Monitor, there have been more questions and comments concerning this. Someone suggested to me that I should write another article simply stating that anything can be mailed free so long as it's marked as being for the use of the blind. This doesn't quite meet the case. The package should not only state that the article is for the use of the blind, but the article must actually be for the use of the blind. To see just how the Post Office felt about mailing conventional tape

recorders as free matter, I wrote to Roy L. Sheridan, Director, Mail Classification Branch, Post Office Department, and had the following reply:

Conventional tape recorders, ordinary portable record players (phonograph), conventional cassette machine, and conventional typewriters may be mailed free of postage under the provisions of Section 138.2, Postal Manual, provided the items are for the use of the blind or other persons who cannot use or read conventionally printed material because of a physical impairment as required by Section 138.1a, Postal Manual, and provided the other conditions in Section 138.1, Postal Manual are met.

We had two other questions, one concerning mailing books for the blind overseas:

For twenty years and more, I have been receiving library books from my library in London, England, that is, ever since I came over here. I am still putting five cents on each volume when I return them. Tell me, is that necessary? I don't mind paying it, but naturally not if I don't have to. Believe me, I am not complaining, because as I say, I don't mind paying. But your article in The Braille Monitor just set me wondering. You didn't mention overseas mail, so I thought I'd write and ask you.

The Des Moines Post Office authority has told us that books for the blind may be mailed overseas free of postage as long as they go by surface mail and not air mail.

Thank you for your fine article in The Braille Monitor which I read (on records).

Of course I have a question and perhaps you know the answer. I am legally blind and have MS and am unable to write but type, very slowly, on an electric machine, borrowed from my sister. Does my correspondence require postage?

Thank you for your help.

The letter typed on a regular typewriter to be sent to a sighted person would need to have postage on it. The first paragraph in the March 1969 issue of The Braille Monitor would still apply in this case.

Unsealed letters in Braille, large print, on tape or disk may be mailed by blind people to anyone postage free! The "free letters" authorization is only available to blind people themselves, but it may be used by them when writing to other blind people, to sighted people, to organizations, when they write to anybody, but all such stampless letters must be unsealed and they must be written in Braille, large print, or on disk or tape. Letters written by sighted people to blind people must bear postage even though such letters are written in Braille, in large print, or on disk or tape. If a letter is sealed it must bear postage even though it is written by a blind person in Braille, large print, or on disk or tape. The postage

free letters for the blind provisions of the postal rate laws do not apply when a blind person writes a letter on a standard typewriter or writes a letter in any form other than Braille, large print, or on disk or tape.

Are there any more questions or problems on all this? Let's look at them all and get clarification from the Post Office!

* * * * *

HIS MIND'S EYE

by

Phil Casey

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the Washington (D. C.) Post.]

When Sanford D. Greenberg, aged twenty-eight, stands in his handsome, comfortable, book-lined office on the seventh floor at the Watergate and looks through his wall-to-wall windows at the city below, he can make out the world's light and see, if he focuses through the center of his right eye, tiny, isolated fragments of the world he loves to live in.

The important things about Greenberg are not that he is rich, almost completely blind and obviously going great places despite his terrible handicap, but that he is brilliant and brave and full of thought, wit and humor, and wears his blindness with a calm that he fought arduously to achieve.

Greenberg is also honest, and he may deny that he has achieved any great calm and hates any newspaper feature that starts off with emphasis on his eyes. But his triumph over the failure of his eyes and his negotiation with life and work and family and money seem much more impressive even than the fact that he is chairman of a big enterprise, EDP Technology, Inc., which he founded only a year and half ago.

He is vague about nothing, except how much money is coming his way, and the closest he came to admitting that he is loaded and something of a millionaire is that things have improved, dollarwise, since his days as a \$2100-a-year Marshall scholar at Oxford University.

"Let's say," he suggested, in a burst of financial candor, "that there is now a significant difference in my net worth."

But he will talk happily about his closest friend, Arthur Garfunkel, of Simon and Garfunkel. "He's my son's godfather," said Greenberg. "He's a superb fellow, and I love him dearly."

Greenberg went blind at nineteen, from glaucoma, while he was a student at Columbia University. He has almost no sight now. He can distinguish light and see, with "tunnel" vision in his right eye, bits and pieces of the world about him. He walks without a cane, reads (business reports, history, political works, fiction, poetry, everything), writes books and moves with such ease that it is all but impossible to realize that he is almost without sight. Focusing, he can see lips, or eyes, a line of print, or one stripe at a time of a vivid, many-colored painting of horizontal stripes on his office wall.

"How did I adjust to this," he said. "I still haven't adjusted. How do you adjust to a thing like this?"

It's clear that he did something. After being completely blind for several months, he regained this very partial sight and went on to become a Phi Beta Kappa and get a B.A. at Columbia, an M.A. at Harvard, and M.B.A. at Columbia, and a Ph.D. at Harvard. He also studied at Oxford University and attended Harvard Law School for one year. He lectured at Harvard and Columbia. His studies were mainly history and government.

Early in the 1960's, after he had been stricken with glaucoma, Greenberg developed and got patents on an electronic device for compressed speech, enabling listeners to hear up to 1,000 words a minute. He was selected as one of the ten outstanding young men of 1966 by the U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce and was named a White House Fellow, serving a year on President Johnson's science advisory staff. He collaborated on a book published last spring, "The President's Advisory System". He is at work on another book, dealing with "race and world politics", and is starting still another.

After he left the White House and decided to try his hand at business, he was asked to plan, establish and head a computer firm. With \$2 million invested by White, Weld & Co., Wall Street investment bankers, and William Rosenwald, heir to a Sears, Roebuck & Co. fortune, he founded EDP Technology, Inc. (The initials are for "electronic data processing.")

"They bet on me," he said. "I still remember sitting in a little office here in town holding that check for \$2 million." It seems to have been a good bet.

The firm, now worth \$80 million, recently signed a contract to purchase the Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory for \$25 million.

Greenberg's company, so young it has yet to publish its first annual statement, specializes in applying computer technology to social, economic, health, welfare, educational and urban problems.

Among the top executives Greenberg has hired are former Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman and Dr. James E. Goddard, former director of the U. S. Food and Drug Administration. EDP has four subsidiaries, and the Cornell laboratory would make a fifth.

Greenberg, only eleven years out of high school, already has been a college lecturer, an inventor, a scholar and writer and a political and social analyst. He is now deep in the business world, convinced that the computer industry will be the great industry, "the fastest growing industry" of the last half of the 20th Century.

He, his wife Susan, their seventeen-month-old son, Paul, and eleven-day-old son James, live in a five-room, two-level apartment on the seventh floor at the Watergate, only a few minutes walk from his complex of offices on the seventh and other floors of the apartment development. . . .

* * * * *

BLIND JAIL VENDOR BARRED

by

Bob Lundegaard

Minneapolis Tribune Staff Writer

The blind man who sells food and cigarettes to prisoners in the Hennepin County jail has been barred from the jail area. That means that sixty-five year old Arvo Lehtinen may also have to give up his newspaper route in the Courthouse and go on relief, because the jail provides most of his income.

To the jailers, bailiffs, clerks and secretaries in the six-story building, he is a familiar sight pulling his newspaper cart. "They wanted to get me out of there," Lehtinen said Friday. "The excuse was that the prisoners make an awful mess with the wrappings and containers. But I heard that the sheriff gave orders to terminate my selling because I was a security breach. I haven't been able to get hold of him to find out what he means, because I never had any trouble up there."

Sheriff Donald J. Omodt said yesterday that the candy could be used to smuggle contraband or messages to prisoners. He said that having a jail vendor is "an absolutely absurd practice that is not followed by any other jail in the country." Omodt said other reasons for eliminating the vending service included the provision of hot meals for all prisoners, eliminating the "need" for candy; the danger of sweets to diabetic prisoners; the unknown condition of the candy being sold; and the nuisance of the candy wrappers on the floor.

He said he notified Lehtinen last January that the service would have to be discontinued, and gave him six months to find another source of income. The deadline was extended several times until Lehtinen became "defiant", Omodt said.

Omodt said Lehtinen turned down an offer to stock the vending machines in the area, but Lehtinen said he would be willing to stock them. Lehtinen, who was blinded in a

dynamite accident when he was eleven, has been working at the jail since 1961. "There's been a blind man selling up there for more than forty years," he said. "I took over from Ernie, who'd been doing it for nineteen years, and before Ernie there was Gus."

His wife, who works half-time as a building matron, drives him to and from work. Their day begins at 4 a.m. so he can be at the Courthouse before 6 to stack the morning newspapers in the racks. He made the rounds of the jail with a wagon containing milk, orange drink, sandwiches, cake and pie, potato chips, cigarettes and candy, selling them through the bars of the cells.

He'd also make change for prisoners who wanted to use the jail telephone. On the county side he kept a refrigerator filled with about \$200 worth of goods. Yesterday he emptied the refrigerator and took the jail elevator down for the last time.

Of his average weekly earnings of \$75 or \$80, he said, the newspapers accounted for only "\$4 or \$5 a day, I think. I guess I'll find out for sure next week, when that's all I'll have. It doesn't make sense, with all those protesters on welfare, that they won't let a man earn an honest living. I hate like hell to have to go on welfare. They want to know everything about you, like how much money you've got in the bank." Then he chuckled, "But I guess I won't have to worry about that."

* * * * *

BLIND RANCHER INVOLVED IN LIFE

by

Lyn Gladstone

[Editor's Note: The following story appeared in the Rapid City (South Dakota) Journal.]

Let youth ask the questions and "take it from there." That is part of the philosophy of a member of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Branch of Law and Order at Pine Ridge who is heading its drive, in cooperation with the Oglala Sioux Tribal Council, for a Youth Opportunity Home just opening at Porcupine.

He is a blind rancher, James "Bubs" Pourier, a juvenile probation officer for the L & O branch, president of the unique Porcupine Cattle Cooperative Association, Inc., and a member of the Shannon County School Board. Despite his handicap, the young rancher bubbles with energy when he speaks of the Youth Opportunity Home. And he is no less enthusiastic when he works on the cooperative's summer cattle feeding project, counsels youths who have been referred to him by the tribal court or urges support for what is the nation's first program on Indian dropouts. As a member of the Shannon board, he helped secure that program as a pilot study in Pine Ridge where the dropout rate is one of the largest in the United States.

Pourier has a zest for activity and getting involved shown by few persons with similar handicaps. It probably started with his desire to complete his education after he became blind. He lost the sight in his right eye at age three after he suddenly turned around into a flaming stick which pierced his eyeball. He lost sight in the second eye in a similar accident when he was seven and was hit by a spring-type pool stick. Pourier went to the State School for the Blind at Gary and, following graduation attended South Dakota State University at Brookings for four years. He received a degree in sociology in 1960. Later he attended Dakota Wesleyan in Mitchell, taking courses in social work and practical law. In 1962, he married Jeanne Marie Ryan of the Cheyenne Indian Reservation at Mobridge. She also is a graduate of SDSU with a bachelor of science degree in nursing. Both worked with the Service to the Blind at Denver until the following year when they moved to Pine Ridge. She became a nurse in the Public Health Service and Pourier accepted a position as a tribal judge and later director of the tribe's National Youth Corps program.

Still later Pourier joined the BIA Law and Order Branch as juvenile probation officer and began working on the Youth Opportunity Home project when it was authorized by the BIA and the tribal council May 1. The YOH became a reality this week as the Porcupine School opened in a new location in a brand new building. The old school buildings, including some dormitory space, completely equipped kitchen, recreation building and other facilities, were turned over to the home by the BIA. "All we need is money and more equipment to operate with," says Pourier. "Donations of all types of equipment would be appreciated--particularly woodworking, arts and crafts, and recreation equipment such as basketballs, baseballs, pool tables, also TV sets and couches."

Initially, he explains, the home plans to take in twenty neglected Indian youths not now served by other youth opportunity programs, and later to expand that number. The children will be under twenty-four-hour supervision of men and women and be bused to elementary or secondary schools according to their needs. Its program will be primarily one of rehabilitation, he advises, and will be coordinated with the tribal government, BIA, including its work experience program handled by the welfare department, and mental health agencies. Only funding in sight, Pourier reports, is 10 percent of the Branch of Law & Order food money which has been allocated to the home for food purposes. "We are, however, making application to HUD for additional funding under its Juvenile Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation Program." Pourier says his philosophy on helping youth involves the "old saw about 'idle hands'. I feel we can give them definite help, get them back into the right stream of living and earning livelihood, also into a school setting, through this opportunity home."

It was while he was counseling a group of youths on vocational training, "raising cattle and gardening," he said, "that one boy raised his hand and asked, 'Do you think we have the right to ask any questions?' It stopped me for a second but my answer was a definite affirmative. The questions show what they are thinking and you have to take it from there." Pourier takes to ranching naturally. His great-grandfather, Batiste Pourier, he reports, was a scout and brought a herd of horses into this area in the late 1860's for the army. Later Batiste started ranching and raising horses, primarily for sale to the U.S. Army Remount

Service at Ft. Laramie and Ft. Robinson. The ranching operation, later including cattle, was continued by his grandfather, John Pourier, and James' father, Eugene. The latter threatened to hang up his spurs and saddle five years ago but is still riding and roping as he ranches with his five sons, James, Eugene Raymond, Thomas, Theodore Paul and Sidney Louis.

Only a sister, Georgia Rae Masic, James reports, does not belong to the Porcupine cattle cooperative. That Indian organization became the first of its kind in the U. S., financed with Office of Economic Opportunity funds under a Farmers Home Administration-administered loan. The young rancher points to the co-op's brand, Bar 67, with a twinkle in his eye as he explains, "The association was organized in 1967 and the idea for it was born in a bar." Actually, James and his brothers had been exploring the idea for quite a few years with neighbors who also joined, and it took a lot of drive and push to make it a reality. And there's probably as much truth as humor when he adds, "The cooperative, association, incorporated were included in the name for tax purposes."

Like other members of the association, Pourier has to donate his one month of labor to the cattle grazing project each year and as most—because they have other steady jobs—he does most of that work on weekends or holidays. He intends, too, to do his share. He rides horseback well but is having a little difficulty with a horse he recently purchased from Harvey Dahl, Rapid City, adviser to the Porcupine cooperative. "The horse I rode before," says Pourier, "became so used to me that it would just go around trees and other obstacles. This one has yet to learn; he's given me a couple of good jolts by going under tree branches." Pourier also decided to learn to rope this summer. "The boys laugh at me," he says, "but as a boy I used to be able to shoot birds with a bean shooter by listening to the flap of their wings."

* * * * *

WEST VIRGINIA CONVENTION by Ida Eller

The sixteenth annual convention of the West Virginia Federation of the Blind, Inc. was held in the Morgan Hotel, Morgantown, West Virginia during 1969. The Morgantown Sightless Guild was the host affiliate.

Throughout the weekend more than one hundred door prizes were graciously accepted by lucky recipients. As a note of interest, at a Saturday night drawing of names by our "First Lady", Ruthie Hunt, her husband and our state president won the jackpot, a \$40 glass paper weight donated by one of the local glass manufacturers.

Serious business began Saturday morning when President Robert L. Hunt called the

convention to order. Two new affiliates were approved for membership: the Student and Professional Division (Affiliate 9), and the Four-County Federation of the Blind (Affiliate 10). All ten affiliates were represented.

Highlights of announcements were that Victor Gonzalez, Legislative Chairman, was named as Federationist of the Year, and the 1969 Yearbook, distributed at the convention, was dedicated to Jospeh Smith, board member from the Morgantown Affiliate, and one of the co-founders of the West Virginia Federation in 1954.

On Saturday afternoon a panel composed of Kenneth Jernigan, NFB President, and Seldon W. Brannon, principal of the School for the Blind at Romney, West Virginia, was concerned with the topic, "Residential School versus the Public School as a Means of Educating Blind Students."

The constitution of the state federation was amended by the convention delegates to permit membership-at-large members.

We were especially honored to have Dr. Jernigan as our Saturday night banquet speaker. He not only spoke of the NFB in the past, but spoke with conviction of our goals for the future. Special awards presented at the banquet included one to Victor Gonzales, from both Washington and West Virginia for his outstanding work in behalf of the severely handicapped. Mary Thompson won the C. C. Cerone scholarship award in the amount of \$100. The Parkersburg Affiliate won the Charles Monfradi award for the largest increase in active members during the year, which included a cash award of \$25. Charters were presented to the delegates from the two new affiliates.

Among the resolutions passed were the following:

1. To support S. 2461 as introduced by Senator Jennings Randolph which ammends the Randolph-Sheppard Act, hopefully to increase employment opportunities for the blind. Also to increase the income of the present stand operators.
2. To endorse the International Federation of the Blind and donate \$100.
3. To establish an annual Jacobus tenBroek Educational Scholarship worth \$100.
4. To publish an informative brochure on the West Virginia Federation of the Blind and to participate in the annual state fair.

The officers elected for the coming year are: Robert L. Hunt, President, Buckhannon; Guy Parks, First Vice-President, Clarksburg; Alva Huffman, Second Vice-President, Charleston; Paul A. Hughes, Secretary, Wheeling; Mrs. Evelyn Milhorn, Financial Secretary, Wheeling; E. Sid Allen, Treasurer, Huntington; Harry Highland, Parkersburg.

* * * * *

BOOKS FOR THE BLIND
SWEEP BEST SELLER LIST

by
Florence Grannis

[Editor's Note: Mrs. Grannis is Assistant Director in Charge of Library and Social Services for the Blind, Iowa Commission for the Blind, Des Moines, Iowa.]

The Library of Congress Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped announces that all but five of The New York Times Book Review best sellers for January 18, 1970, are being issued as talking books. The list (with annotations supplied by the writer) is produced below.

FICTION

THE GODFATHER. Puzo.

"The 'Godfather' is Don Vito Corleone, a Sicilian-American patriarch, already one of the top men in the Mafia. He dominates gambling but eschews the drug racket as beneath his dignity . . . Whatever he wants he gets. Corleone wants his godson, the singer Johnny Fontane, to star in a Hollywood hit film, but the producer, Jack Woltz, adamantly refuses . . . Don Vito brings him to heel in gruesome fashion . . ." ¹

THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN. Fowles.

Set in England in the 1860's and 1870's, "the book concerns a simple triangle—(Ernestine) a spoiled, rather shallow young daughter of a merchant prince staying at Lyme Regis with her aunt, her fiance (Charles) a well-born, well-fixed young amateur scientist, and (Sarah), the French lieutenant's woman." ²

THE HOUSE ON THE STRAND. du Maurier.

A young Englishman, Richard Young, with an American wife, Vita, "is induced by an old college friend to test an hallucinogenic drug. It transports him back to the 14th century, in the same corner of the Cornish coast where he is vacationing in the friend's house. He finds himself vividly aware of the people who lived there, although they cannot find him and he cannot touch them. But he watches the lively drama in which they are caught up. He is poignantly aware of their tangled lives and compulsively returns on trip after trip to find out what happens to them." ³

THE INHERITORS. Robbins.

An exciting novel built around the career of a TV tycoon, whose contribution to civilization is the showing of post-1948 films on nighttime networks. High

up in his lonely attic studio on a hill near Cannes, Harold Robbins hit upon the missing ingredient. Sex! And so—Stephen Gaunt, the whiz kid of Sinclair Broadcasting, mixes his programing with girls, girls, girls, in “The Inheritors,” which is Volume Three in the author’s trilogy dealing with the cinema. (The others were “The Dream Merchants” and “The Carpetbaggers.”)⁴

PUPPET ON A CHAIN. MacLean.

Alistair MacLean sends Maj. Paul Sherman, London chief of Interpol, to Amsterdam to collect information on narcotics too valuable to be forwarded by diplomatic pouch. At Schipol Airport he sees the messenger shot down before he can reach him. Then problems are compounded by barrel organs, beautiful puppets exquisitely dressed in traditional Dutch costumes, a picture-book town in the Zuider Zee, the clocks of Kasteel Linden, and the giant crane of urban renewal. A tight swift Dutch treat.⁵

IN THIS HOUSE OF BREDE. Godden.

“Brede Abbey is a monastery for English Benedictine nuns. The time is the present, and the plot revolves around Philippa Talbot, a former career woman who enters the enclosed order in her 40’s.”⁶

FIRE FROM HEAVEN. Renault.

Recounts the first twenty years in the life of Alexander of Macedon, Alexander the Great. The story is not particularly fresh; nearly everybody has read Plutarch, and Miss Renault leans heavily on the details found only in Plutarch’s Lives.⁷

THE SEVEN MINUTES. Wallace.

This novel concerns a “censorship case in which a book-seller in suburban L.A. is tried for selling a novel first published in Paris . . . in the 1930’s. A copy has been found in the car of a young (man accused of rape. Mike Barrett, a) crusading young lawyer, . . . (reveals in a) courtroom scene who the author of the book really is (a prominent figure in American politics) and has him testify about the great love affair on which it was based. “The Seven Minutes” refers to the sequence in the novel under attack in which a woman indulges in erotic fantasies during sexual intercourse.”⁸

THE GANG THAT COULDN’T SHOOT STRAIGHT. Breslin.

Jimmy Breslin’s first novel is about the time in Brooklyn, not so very long ago, when the Gallo boys declared war on the Profaci mob and a lot of people got killed. It is a journalistic book in the best sense of the word: crisp, informed, funny, cruel, and at times very real. Breslin’s gangsters are vicious but not very smart, and they are endowed with all the compassion and moral fiber of men who would set fire to cats for the fun of it. In short, they are like real South Brooklyn gangsters. Breslin’s knowledge of the Mafia and its workings is extensive and accurate, but it is not the sort you are likely to find in the

newspapers or most books. It is street knowledge. It may have its facts a little twisted and its body counts may be inflated, but it has other qualities. For example, it is true.⁹

THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN. Crichton.

This novel describes “five days of the world’s first biologic crisis, touched off when an unmanned NASA research satellite is recalled after mysteriously jumping its orbit. Landing near a desolate town in Arizona, the capsule, contaminated in space by a . . . lethal microorganism, kills all but two of the town’s 48 inhabitants . . . Almost immediately, the ‘Project Wildfire’ team of (four) scientists . . . are mobilized in a super-secret laboratory containing the most sophisticated equipment . . . five stories beneath the Nevada desert . . . Oversight by the scientists, bureaucrats (including the President) and the supposedly failure-proof machines imperil all of life on earth . . . Toward (the climax a) recorded voice informs the scientists that the organism has contaminated even the underground laboratory and ‘there are now three minutes to atomic self-destruct.’ ”¹⁰

GENERAL

THE SELLING OF THE PRESIDENT. McGinniss.

A young Philadelphia reporter who informally joined the Nixon forces at the early stages of the 1968 Presidential campaign describes the methods used by a team of advertising and TV professionals to create a TV image to make Richard Nixon acceptable to the American voter.¹¹

THE PETER PRINCIPLE. Peter and Hull.

With tongue in cheek, Peter, a Canadian educator, with the aid of author-journalist Hull examines occupational incompetence showing how everyone in any vocational hierarchy is controlled by the Peter Principle. The principle which gave rise to the new science of hierarchiology states that in an hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence. With mock seriousness Peter explores various manifestations and ramifications of the principle, analyzes the reasons for human failure, suggests ways of remaining at a level of competence, and in conclusion, applies the principle to the evolutionary hierarchy.¹²

PRESENT AT THE CREATION. Acheson.

The memoirs of “a prime mover in the shift from traditional (American) isolationism to collective security that took place . . . between 1941 and 1953—during which he served as an Assistant Secretary, Under Secretary, and, for four years, as President Truman’s Secretary of State. . . . (He gives an account of his economic-warfare activities during World War II and of his part in developing the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan . . . (He also devotes

a) chapter to the beginnings of American intervention in Indochina.”¹³

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS. Fraser.

A biography which presents Mary as a tragic figure “betrayed by those closest to her. Her golden years as a French princess . . . and her brief marriage to the French king Francis II present a . . . contrast to the bitterness and . . . hatred she faced when she left the adaptive land to reenter Protestant Scotland as its Catholic ruler. (The book describes how) her ill-fated marriages to Darnley and Bothwell, her incessant struggle with political and religious saboteurs, her flight to England and subsequent imprisonment . . . led to her execution at Fotheringhay.”¹⁴

THE COLLAPSE OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC. Shirer.

While the fall of France was above all a military fall, it had many non-military causes, and Shirer brings these out in this political history.¹⁵

AMBASSADOR'S JOURNAL. Galbraith.

A diary covering the twenty-seven months beginning with the Harvard professor's appointment by President Kennedy as Ambassador to India to his return to the state after the assassination of the President. He is concerned with diplomatic events in New Delhi and Washington as well as “such issues as Berlin, Vietnam, Laos, the Congo, the European Common Market, U.S. taxes and agriculture policy.”¹⁶

PRIME TIME. Kendrick.

The life of Edward R. Murrow. A biography of the radio and television commentator which describes his early life in the state of Washington and his activities in the international student movement in the thirties, which led to his entry into radio broadcasting.¹⁷

THE GRAHAM KERR COOKBOOK.

The Graham Kerr Cookbook is a volume which, like its author, is a handsome package of food wisdom, culinary expertise, creative ideas and fun.¹⁸

IN SOMEONE'S SHADOW. McKuen.

The McKuen winning combination is made up of a touch of Alfred Noyes (“I’ll tell them all the times I’ve had/ while hiking the highways and sailing the seas”) and a soupcon of Villon (“How many July afternoons are never coming back?”) enlivened by ersatz Ogden Nash (“There was a time/ when bar talk and Bartok did the job”). But if one seriously looks for the Saint John the Baptist of the anointed McKuen, one must at last admit there is no serious contender to Edgar Guest. Who else could have inspired “Of the long road home/ we’re meant to go it alone,/ still there are times we recall/ the ivy that clings to the wall”? When you add the realpolitik of Ayn Rand (“Mostly it’s letting yourself come first for a while”) you have the compleat McKuen. It’s

sad to know many young people will think you're dead to contemporary aesthetic values if you don't supply McKuen, but they will, so you better.¹⁹

Why have The Inheritors by Robbins, The Seven Minutes by Wallace, and the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, the Graham Kerr Cookbook and In Someone's Shadow by McKuen been omitted? It is obvious that the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language would not make a very satisfactory talking book.

Let's look at some of the things said about those other books.

THE INHERITORS by Harold Robbins
406 pp. New York
Trident Press. \$6.95

You wouldn't think that an exciting novel would be built around the career of a TV tycoon, whose contribution to civilization is the showing of post-1948 films on nighttime networks. You're right. It can't. There's got to be something else. But what? High up in his lovely attic studio on a hill near Cannes, Harold Robbins hit upon the missing ingredient. Sex! And so—Stephen Gaunt, the whiz kid of Sinclair Broadcasting, mixes his programing with girls, girls, girls, in “The Inheritors,” which is Volume Three in the author's trilogy dealing with the cinema. (The others were “The Dream Merchants” and “The Carpetbaggers.”)

There are so many girls he could give them numbers, but Steve prefers nicknames. To wit: Green-eyed Girl; Blonde Girl; Chinese Girl; Golden Girl; Darling Girl; Italian Girl. Darling Girl, for example, is the daughter of Sam Benjamin, a motion-picture producer from whom Gaunt buys his product. (Benjamin, who is perpetually tumescent, is a walking denial of one of Mr. Robbin's earlier titles: “Never Love a Stranger.”) Darling Girl later turns out to be a dope fiend—and when she kicks off under the ministrations of Doctor Girl (you've got to believe me!), Stephen becomes a twosome with his last love in the book: Lawyer Girl.

This may be a smart move, because our hero has just jockeyed Sinclair Broadcasting into a conglomerate . . . Ooops! I've left out Barbara, the boss's daughter, whom he marries in an earlier chapter. (She dies, poor thing.) And Nancy, whom he knew before all those nicknames. Any questions?²⁰

THE SEVEN MINUTES by Irving Wallace
607 pp. New York
Simon & Schuster. \$7.50

Irving Wallace, who has dealt with some of the great questions of our day, now turns his big guns on the issue of censorship. When he is done, the complexities of

pornography have been blasted to nothingness. With dialogue that cries out to be encased in comic-strip balloons. ("Zelkin slapped his hands together. 'Great!' he exclaimed. 'My gosh, why did you keep me in suspense?' ") With characters who would be the envy of Chester Gould, Dick Tracy's daddy. And with a plot that just won't quit.

"The Seven Minutes" is a pornographic book, see, which a self-serving district attorney alleges has incited a poor yap to rape. Actually, the D.A. wants to run for the U.S. Senate, and he and his plutocrat-sponsors figure that a censorship case will give him a rep. But he has reckoned without the talents of "serious, dedicated, quiet, steady" Mike Barrett, who has thrown away a promising corporate career, and the girl he thinks he loves, to conduct the defense. When all seems lost, Mike reveals that J J (no periods) Jadway, the author of "The Seven Minutes," is none other than-but you wouldn't believe me if I told you. I hardly believe it myself.²¹

Would we really want federal money spent on books such as these? In any case, there are good reasons why these particular books are not being done and the omission of them frees money for other worthwhile items. Of course, ponderous as the books are, vapid and inane as they are, much as it would be a waste to spend federal money on them, blind people should have the same chance to read them that their sighted neighbors have and they do have this chance if they rent the taped books from the Best Selling Books for the Blind.²²

We have already seen that at least one reviewer wasn't enthusiastic about McKuen's In Someone's Shadow. Nevertheless, it is on the best seller list--this means people are reading it. We at least will have it hand-Brailled and probably some other group will too. No doubt this will fill the need. Actually, poetry isn't read all that much.

We are enthusiastic about Brailled Cookbooks, and though we have seen only one review of this one, unless it is so dependent on pictures (after all the author is one of the prominent TV chefs), we will probably add the Graham Kerr Cookbook to our collection.

But to go back to our original statement, all but five of the New York Times Book Review best sellers for January 18, 1970 ARE being issued as talking books. Don't beat a path, use your hot line, or wing your request to your regional library today for these books. Remember, it does take them a while to be produced, but it takes some time for your community public library to get print books for your sighted associates too. (It may well be that your talking book will come before the same print books are available for your sighted friends to borrow.) Anyway, these best sellers are coming, and Robert Bray and the other people at the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped should be commended.

FOOTNOTES

1. Saturday Review, quoted in Book Review Digest, May 1969, Vol. 65, No. 3, p. 286.
2. Library Journal, quoted in Book Review Digest, December 1969, Vol. 65, No. 9, p. 28.
3. Christian Science Monitor, quoted in Book Review Digest, December 1969, Vol. 65, No. 9, p. 24.
4. Martin Levin, "Reader's Report," The New York Times Book Review, November 16, 1969, p. 74.
5. "The Book Review," Library Journal, December 1, 1969, p. 4451.
6. Library Journal, quoted in Book Review Digest, November 1969, Vol. 65, No. 8, p. 39.
7. Cecilia Holland, "Alexander the Great: god from a machine," Chicago Tribune Book World, November 23, 1969, p. 4.
8. Publishers' Weekly, quoted in Book Review Digest, December 1969, Vol. 65, No. 9, pp. 76-77.
9. L. J. Davis, "Inside gangland," Chicago Tribune Book World, December 21, 1969, pp. 4-5.
10. Newsweek, quoted in Book Review Digest, August 1969, Vol. 65, No. 5, p. 65.
11. Book Review Digest, November 1969, Vol. 65, No. 8, pp. 62-63.
12. "Classified Books," Booklist, June 1, 1969, p. 1102.
13. Saturday Review, quoted in Book Review Digest, December 1969, Vol. 65, No. 9, p. 1.
14. Book Review Digest, December 1969, Vol. 65, No. 9, p. 29.
15. "Report on the terminal illness of a sick republic," Chicago Tribune Book World, January 9, 1969, p. 1.
16. New York Times Book Review, quoted in Book Review Digest, December 1969, Vol. 65, No. 9, p. 30.
17. Book Review Digest, November 1969, Vol. 65, No. 8, p. 53.
18. Jean Tallman, "Gourmet Gallops Into Print," Des Moines Tribune, November 14, 1969, p. 20.
19. Dorothy Curley, Brooklyn Public Library, "The Book Review," Library Journal, October 15, 1969, p. 3652.
20. Martin Levin, "Reader's Report," The New York Times Book Review, November 16, 1969, p. 74.
21. Martin Levin, "Reader's Report," The New York Times Book Review, October 12, 1969, pp. 56-57.
22. Mr. Frank G. Beury; President, Best Selling Books for the Blind, Inc.; P.O. Box 6852; Townson, Maryland 21204. The Seven Minutes, \$6.00. The Inheritors, \$3.00.

MONITOR MINIATURES

One of the nicer things about the Holiday Season just past was the number of people who let the season's spirit move them to express their appreciation for the Monitor. They did this not only in words of approval but in very solid terms of financial contributions. The words and the Season's Greetings addressed to the Monitor were good for the spirits of the Editors and the Staff and the money was good for the budget. The Monitor costs more than most of our readers probably realize. It takes somewhat over fifteen dollars a year to supply one subscriber with the talking book edition, about eight dollars and fifty cents to cover a year's subscription to the braille edition, and somewhat less for an inkprint. This does not take into account what it costs to prepare the copy from which the Monitor is published.

As the cost of living rises so does the amount of money it takes to produce the Monitor. A little arithmetic will indicate that the Monitor now takes a big bite of the National Federation's annual budget. Yet it is important for each reader to have his own copy for ready reference. Consequently, donations to cover a portion or all of a year's subscription will be most gratefully received. Send your contributions to the NFB Treasurer, Franklin VanVliet, 207 Fisherville Road, Penacook, New Hampshire 03301.

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In testimony before the Committee on Ways and Means of the U. S. House of Representatives, spokesmen of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, the American Council of the Blind, and the American Foundation for the Blind endorsed enactment of H. R. 3782, the National Federation of the Blind's bill introduced by Representative James Burke to make it possible for blind persons to qualify for cash disability insurance benefits with a minimum of six quarters of coverage and without regard to ability to engage in substantial gainful activity. These same organizations also advocated an increase in OASDI benefits of 15 percent or more; health care coverage under title XVIII for individuals entitled to disability insurance benefits, liberalization of the definition of disability for disability insurance beneficiaries, as well as disabled widows, widowers, and surviving divorced wives. In addition, they advocated elimination of the age 50 requirement as well as improved cash benefits for disabled widows, widowers, and surviving divorced wives and improvement in title V (maternal and child health and crippled children's services). All four organizations opposed repeal of titles I, X, and XIV so that acceptance of title XVI as the mechanism for receiving federal funds for public assistance would continue to be optional to the states. They also recommended various improvements in the existing programs of Aid to the Blind, Old Age Assistance, and Aid to the Disabled.

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Donald Gagne, President of the Dubuque (Iowa) Association of the Blind reports that the Mayor of Dubuque has urged all citizens to pay special attention to the capabilities of blind citizens. The Mayor's Proclamation recognized the White Cane as a symbol of

independence and its carriers as citizens who have the desires and capabilities to be just that.

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Federal auditors recently estimated that New York City was spending \$70.9 million a year in excessive payments to welfare recipients. The General Accounting Office, the auditing arm of the Congress, also put the percentages of ineligible families on the city relief rolls and of those being overpaid at a higher level than that of an earlier study of the city welfare program, which was made public recently by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The agency said that 10.7 percent of the welfare families surveyed were ineligible. The auditors also said that 34.1 percent of the families surveyed had received overpayments.

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Frank Smith of the Gem State Blind (Idaho) reports that Federationist John Wickersham is the proud operator of the newest vending stand to begin operation under the program of the Idaho Commission for the Blind. Located in a newly-completed YMCA building in Boise, the restaurant seats about thirty persons in an informal setting, plus an adjoining 200-seat banquet hall. According to Kenneth Hopkins, Commission Director, many other vending stand locations are in the planning stage and will be opening soon. The Idaho Commission is doing great things for the blind.

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John Omundson of Point Reyes (California) is a blind boat builder. The Omundson Boat Works opened three years ago and is expanding. The company does considerable repair work on wooden boats up to twenty-seven feet and recently completed a sixteen-foot pleasure craft for a Phoenix resident. Omundson believes that the most important step for anyone with a similar handicap is to get into a good school such as the Orientation Center for the Blind in Alabany, California where he learned to adjust to blindness.

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In its annual report for the fiscal year ending last June 30, the Federal Rehabilitation Service Administration comes up with some interesting data. The vending stand program gave employment to 3,361 blind operators who received an annual average income of \$5,853. Some 247 new locations were established during the year, making a total for all stands of 3,002. Eight hundred fifty-six of the stands were in Federal locations. Of the 2,082 non-Federal locations, 1,299 were in public buildings and 847 were in private locations. In comparative data, the District of Columbia ranked number one in the number of stands per 100,000 of the general population; Alabama was second and Arkansas third.

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The late William C. Handy, "Father of the Blues", who was blind for several years before his death in 1958, was memorialized by a commemorative postage stamp issued in Memphis, Tennessee in commemoration of that city's sesquicentennial. Although a native of Alabama, Handy, the great Negro blues composer, made his worldwide musical reputation with such songs as "Memphis Blues" and "The Beale Street Blues."

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Blind readers will now have access to two new Braille editions of lay-level booklets on nuclear energy, the Atomic Energy Commission announced. The booklets, from the AEC's Understanding the Atom Series, are "Animals in Atomic Research" and "Nuclear Terms--A Brief Glossary". To date a total of seven booklets from this educational series have been published in Braille. The other subjects are "Nuclear Power and Merchant Shipping," "Careers in Atomic Energy," "Cryogenics," "Lasers" and "Your Body and Radiation." The Library of Congress supplies its regional libraries for the blind with these booklets.

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The Federated Blind of North Dakota now have a new chapter, this one located in Grand Forks. Those three staunch Federationists--Curt and Judy Saunders and Mary Ellen Anderson--went to Fargo to meet with the Board of the FBND and all decided that membership expansion was the number one priority. So, as only they can, Curt and Judy and Mary Ellen went to work organizing a chapter in Grand Forks. It is a high-caliber group which includes some University of North Dakota students, a University philosophy professor and his wife and other enthusiastic members. Several projects are already under way including the showing of NFB publicity films to service clubs in the area, negotiating with University officials about admitting blind students to the College of Education, and investigating the possibility of obtaining a mobility instructor at the School for the Blind. Obviously, this is going to be an activist group!

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The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare announced that, effective immediately, states must establish criteria for identifying situations in which there may be fraud, arrange for prompt referral of such situations to law enforcement agencies, and develop methods of investigation which ascertain the facts without infringing on the legal rights of the individuals involved. These are all part of the strengthened procedures to prevent fraudulent abuse of the Medicaid program. In addition, beginning April 1, 1970, all Medicaid billing forms distributed for use by providers must carry a notice that any fraud or concealment will be prosecuted under applicable Federal or state law or both. Billing forms must also carry a disclaimer of fraud to be signed by the provider of services.

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Speaking of Medicaid, a decision was recently reached by members of the Iowa Nursing

Home Association and custodial home administrators to suspend all admissions of welfare recipients effective the end of January, until state aid for patient care is increased.

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Gwen Rittgers of the Progressive Blind of Missouri reports that the organization has a new youth group called The Eyes of Missouri and their motto is the three I's, Industrious, Inquisitive, and Informative. They plan to meet monthly and will adopt their own projects.

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A news item from India is encouraging. The Chancellors of several universities in that country have agreed to appoint blind teachers in positions in affiliated colleges for a year on an experimental basis. It is learned that five qualified blind men have thus far applied for such positions.

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William Luther, Coordinator of a special electronics training project, located in Miami, Florida, recently discussed the experiences of fifteen blind persons already on the job with major electronics firms throughout Florida in connection with Dade County's (Miami) Employ the Handicapped Committee. The Committee has appointed a special task force to further the employment of additional blind persons by electronics firms.

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Nearly \$33.5 million was expended last year to supplement state reimbursements to local schools to provide a wide variety of services to handicapped children enrolled in public and nonpublic schools of the fifty states and the District of Columbia. Approximately 160,000 children were benefited, including the mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, crippled, and other health-impaired youngsters requiring special education.

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At its January meeting, the Worcester Chapter, Associated Blind of Massachusetts installed the following newly elected officers: President, Rosamond M. Critchley; First Vice-President, William H. Burke; Second Vice-President, Mary Bedrosian; Recording Secretary, Eva Gilbert; Corresponding Secretary, Leona D. Guerin; Financial Secretary, C. Lewis Brothers; Treasurer, Dorothy D. Bailey; Sergeant-at-Arms, Barbara Burritt; members-at-large, Hilda M. Ogilvie and Robert Frost.

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A Boston eye research foundation surgeon reports that contact lenses and artificial

corneas can be cemented directly to the eye with a strong and harmless new surgical glue. The still-experimental use of surgical glue may signal the beginning of a new era in eye surgery. At present it is most useful in sealing leaks in the eyeball where the cornea has been perforated. The same glue is being used as a "spray-on bandage" to close severe battlefield wounds in Vietnam.

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The U. S. Supreme Court agreed recently to decide if the New York Legislature violated Federal law when it reduced welfare payments to mothers of dependent children. At the same time, the Court announced that it would decide if states legally could set up an absolute limit on the amount of welfare money any family with dependent children could receive. The two appeals will be heard together, thus setting the stage for a broad Supreme Court ruling on the authority of states to trim their welfare payments in the face of skyrocketing welfare costs. In the background is a growing chorus of complaints from state and local officials that the Federal courts are encroaching upon the authority of states to set their own welfare policies in light of their available resources, apparently overlooking the fact that more than half of the resources used to support welfare programs comes directly from the Federal Government.

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September 20 was election night for the Davenport Association, and the newly elected officers: President, Wayne Douglas; Vice-President, Roger Vekre; Secretary, Letha Boone; and Treasurer, Kent Cellman, are looking forward to a fruitful and productive year on a national, state, and local level. Barbara Vekre was elected Legislative Committee Chairman, and a White Cane Candy Committee was formed. It is expected that these two committees will greatly increase our legislative activity and fundraising sales as we strive for our most successful year ever.

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This summer some nineteen applicants from as many foreign countries have had their applications for grants to visit this country forwarded to the U. S. State Department by the National Federation of the Blind. This project brings to the United States blind persons who have responsibility for the blind in their countries and who wish to become acquainted with the work of organizations of and for the blind in the United States, and to study the philosophies and techniques of such organizations. Grantees will have individual programs of observation and consultation arranged in accordance with their particular interests by the New York office of the Governmental Affairs Institute, with the cooperation of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB). The program will include attendance at the Federation's annual convention to be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 2 through 7, 1970.

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Pat Gleeson of the Newark, New Jersey Evening News writes that "a Maplewood businessman, who has overcome a visual handicap within the past few years, is now trying to make life brighter for others with the same problem throughout the United States. Several months ago, Selig Weinberg, president of Trans Travel, Inc., 1634 Springfield Avenue, Maplewood, with Olympic Airways, New York, conceived the idea of arranging tours to Israel and the Holy Land for the blind and the visually handicapped. Tours are under the sponsorship of National Aid of Visually Handicapped dedicated to the partially seeing. Each tour is geared for fifteen to thirty persons and up to forty can be accommodated.

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The election of the Kansas City Chapter of the PBM was held this month and the following persons were elected: President, Tiny Beedle; Vice-President, Mike Briggs; Recording Secretary, Jana Sims; Corresponding Secretary, Pauline Salters; Treasurer, Marty Rogers; Chairman of Finance, Helen Mohler, and Chairman of Education and Welfare, Jerry Salters. Our state convention dates are April 3 through 5 at the Aladdin Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri.

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A recent AP release states, "a larcenous crow with a penchant for parking tickets was lured to justice by a used-car dealer wearing a sweater done in bright, parking-ticket yellow. L. A. Jacobsen, the police chief of Ogden, Utah somberly charged "Blacky Crow" with petty larceny and Judge Charles Sneddon imposed a sentence for thirty days in the pen. The pen is a wire enclosure to be kept by Gus Cutrube, the bird's captor. For weeks, the police were frustrated as the crow snatched tickets from windshields and flew off to munch on them in hidden places. "Smart. A real bright bird," the chief said. The capture, Chief Jacobsen said, came when Mr. Cutrube walked across the lot wearing a sweater the same shade of yellow as the city's citations.

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Dr. Fatima A. Shah, First Vice-President of the International Federation of the Blind, and President of the Pakistan Association of the Blind was honored by the President of Pakistan, M. Yah Yah Khan, when he bestowed upon her the T. P. K. Award. Fatima may now write the letters T. P. K. after her name, the letters standing for Tamqm Pakistan Kuaidiasm. Fatima is the first blind person to receive this honor. Captain M. R. Malik, President of the Pakistan Association of the Blind, Sargodha Division received the T. P. K. honor with the privilege of using these initials after his name. Captain Malik is an amputee as a result of an accident, but he uses his two hooks, substituting for hands, in an amazing dexterity. Both honorees were delegates to the convention of the I.F.B. in Colombo, Ceylon, contributing generously of their experience and ability to other participants. Congratulations to Dr. Shah and Captain Malik from National Federationists.

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On Tuesday, December 30, 1969, Francis Flanagan, President of the Connecticut Federation of the Blind, passed away at fifty-seven years of age after about a month's stay in the hospital. The funeral was held in Bridgeport at St. Peter's Roman Catholic church on Friday, January 2, 1970, with a high requiem mass. The eulogy set forth his contribution to the community, to the church, and to his fellow men which was rather extensive--citing that he would be greatly missed in his organizational activities as well as by those whom he served in the community. Shortly before his death, a First Vice President was appointed to fill the unfinished term of the former Vice President who moved out of the state. In filling Francis Flanagan's shoes, it is recognized that there will be a monumental job before the organized blind movement in Connecticut in accomplishing the goals of Mr. Flanagan and the blind of the state. The new President serving out the unfinished term of Mr. Flanagan is Miss Julia Casey, 110 Helen Street, Hamden, Connecticut 06514.

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The death of New Mexico Federationist Joseph William Ihnot was recently reported. Born in 1895, Ihnot became a cook at an early age and had been employed at Bruns Hospital in Santa Fe and Los Alamos Medical Center. He received a citation from the War Department, Army Service Forces, Corps of Engineers, Manhattan District, which reads, "This is to certify that Joseph W. Ihnot has participated in work essential to the production of the atomic bomb, thereby contributing to the successful conclusion of World War II. . . This certificate is awarded in appreciation of effective service." The certificate is signed by the Secretary of War. Ihnot operated vending stands in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Los Alamos for eighteen years. Ihnot had an active interest in improving conditions for the blind and held offices in both the local chapter and the state organization.

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At the November meeting of the Holyoke Association of the Blind, the following officers were elected: President, Arthur Corbeil; Vice President, Howard Kane; Secretary, Anna Corbeil; Treasurer, Mrs. Hurley.

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The West Covina Chapter CCB recently held an election of officers. Luke LaValle was re-elected as President; Vice President, Art Speer; Secretary, Jean Redhead; and Treasurer, Bob Apperson. Two board members were elected, Harold Campbell and Carl Fujimoto as well as a delegate to the NFB Convention, Luke LaValle, and an alternate delegate, Barbara Blake. In its first year the West Covina Chapter increased its membership from seven to twenty-three. The chapter is a member of the West Covina Chamber of Commerce and the Coordinating Council of West Covina. It was selected as a project for the year by the Junior Women's Club of West Covina. President Luke LaValle reports that for the first time the adult education system has opened its doors to the blind in West Covina--he was the first to enroll.

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